- **Sports / A21** Campbell wards off Tiger attack to capture US Open
- **Metro / A18** 1st trolley garbage bins in Metro roll in Muntinlupa

CANNES LIONS 2005

- **News / A5** RP ads make it to Cannes Lions shortlist
- **World / A10** Rebel attacks in Iraq kill 85 in 2 days
- **Sports / A23** Horry 3-pointer puts Spurs a win away from crown

Now, cars are honking, 'Hello! Hello! Garci!'

FROM ring tones to car horns? Only in the Philippines.

The "Hello! Hello! Garci" sound clip is now a car horn and the Department of Justice can't do anything but blame it on Fi-

NOW/ A7

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World crude prices hit all-time high, near $60

SINGAPORE—Crude oil futures hit a record high Monday, reaching US$59.23 a barrel in Asian trading on concerns that demand will outpace refineries' ability to produce diesel and gasoline in the second half of the year.

The kidnapping last week of six oil workers, including two Germans, in Nigeria, Africa's largest producer, also contributed to

WORLD/ A8

Fares up; peso down to 55

Time not appropriate to speak on tape—GMA

By Philip C. Tubeza

A CONGRESSIONAL investigation of the alleged wiretapping of President Macapagal-Arroyo's telephone conversation opens today under a cloud of legitimacy, with the Chief Executive declaring she does not think it is time for her to speak on the controversy.

A three-paragraph letter from the House panel addressed to "Her Excellency" and urging her "with all due respect" to break her silence on the wiretapping incident is to be sent to Malacañang today, said Rep. Gilbert Remulla, chair of the joint investigation by five House committees.

"I will make the appropriate statements on the issues at the appropriate time," Ms Arroyo told reporters in Hong Kong, where she made a half-day trip yesterday to meet investors. "But it is not the appropriate time … when there is extensive speculation."

On the eve of the inquiry, Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago said that without Ms Arroyo confirming that hers was the voice in the alleged wiretap, there was no basis for conducting any investigation, whether by the House or a state prosecutor.

The administration senator also said that the tape in question could not be used in any investigation because it has to be properly authenticated first in legal terms.

A former trial judge, Santiago insisted that the House should respect Ms Arroyo's executive privi-

TIME/ A6

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo meets with business leaders to drum up investment opportunities in the Philippines in a luncheon at a Hong Kong hotel.

AP

Invest in RP, Gloria urges HK businessmen

HONG KONG—A virtual Who's Who of Hong Kong businessmen ignored the "political noise" from Manila to listen to President Macapagal-Arroyo speak about the Philippines as "the best investment area in Asia, if not the world."

Ms Arroyo described the Hong Kong businessmen as "the senior business people that will make the decisions that can deliver prosperity in the Philippines."

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said in his report the Hong Kong business leaders were "unanimous" in describing the President's one-day trip to the former British colony yesterday as a strong message that the administration was serious in its efforts to attract investors and pursue economic reforms.

"They were also unanimous in the view that the political noise coming out of the Philippines is overshadowing awareness of the very real economic achievements that

INVEST/ A8

HELLO GARCI
OUST GMA
OUST GMA!
OUST GMA

AROUND 30 Filipino activists and workers rally outside the hotel, calling for Ms Arroyo's ouster amid scandals plaguing her administration.

AP

Palace says high crude prices peril economy

By Clarissa S. Batino, Doris C. Dumlao and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

JEEPNEY and bus fares are up 33-36 percent, the peso is down to a five-month low, and companies are planning to lay off workers. To top it all, Malacañang warns the economy is in peril due to soaring world crude prices.

The Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board yesterday kicked off a slew of negative news on the economic front by giving the go-ahead for the implementation of higher public transport fares after three weeks of delay.

Starting today, jeepney passengers in Luzon will have to cough up P7.50 for the first 4 km, plus P1.25 for every additional kilometer. The LTFRB approved a P2 increase not only in the minimum fare for jeepneys but also for regular buses plying Metro Manila routes.

Passengers of non-airconditioned Metro buses will have to shell out P8 for the first 5 km plus P1.75 for each succeeding kilometer.

Students and senior citizens, however, will only have to pay P6 for the the basic jeepney fare and P6.40 for the minimum bus fare.

Junking objections by consumer groups, LTFRB Chair Ma. Elena Bautista described as "reasonable" the fare increases that were prompted by the rising cost of diesel and projections of future increases, the 10-percent rise in the minimum wage in Manila and the effect of a recent expansion of the value-added tax.

The LTFRB also approved corresponding increases in the jeepney and bus fares for the rest of the country. Even so, Bautista assured the public that the latest round of fare increases would be the last for the rest of the year.

The increases were supposed to be implemented on May 27, but were deferred after consumer groups complained that the rise was beyond the increase in fuel prices.

Drivers and owners of jeepneys

FARES/ A8

Militants, Erap loyalists unite for anti-GMA rally

By Norman Bordadora

THEY were virtually at each other's throats four years ago. Yesterday, at Kowloon House in Quezon City, they shared the same table, hurling denunciations at a suddenly common enemy.

Truly, politics makes for strange bedfellows.

One group—composed of civil society and militant sectors—had supported then Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo as constitutional successor to disgraced Joseph Estrada in the Edsa II uprising in January 2001.

The other group was made up of Estrada loyalists, who tried to unseat Ms Arroyo four months later in the failed Edsa Tres salvo.

Both groups yesterday called for a national day of protest on June 24 at the Liwasang Bonifacio in an apparent bid to create a groundswell for an Edsa IV—this time with Ms Arroyo as the target.

The demonstration, which some organizers predict will draw at least 20,000 protesters, is intended to call for Ms Arroyo's resignation in the wake of allegations, based on her supposed wiretapped phone conversations with an election commissioner, that she was involved in an attempt to cheat during the May 2004 elections.

Estrada, himself, was around—if only in spirit.

In a statement, the deposed President said it would be best for Ms Arroyo to admit wrongdoing or step down because "it is now impossible for her to govern."

Estrada said he was willing to support "the nation's search for the truth." He added that he was also "actively helping in a joint search for … leaders who could help ensure a smooth transition."

"The basis of unity is clear," leftist leader and Bayan Muna

MILITANTS/ A8

WANTED GARCI
?
Huwag itikas ang Katotohanan
AKBAYAN

MILITANT groups warn the public about the continued disappearance of former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano during a rally outside the Comelec office in Intramuros, Manila.

REM ZAMORA

Ebdane presence at air base undercuts claim of flight

By Leila B. Salaverria, *in Manila*
Grace Cantal-Albasin and JB Deveza
PDI Mindanao Bureau

PUBLIC Works Secretary Hermogenes Ebdane Jr.'s presence at the Villamor Air Base yesterday seemed intended to belie opposition claims that he had spirited former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano out of the country.

Garcillano's case was an altogether different matter.

Despite the insistence of the Bureau of Immigration that it had no records to show he had left the Philippines, the controversy-hounded former poll official continued to keep himself out of public view, feeding the mystery surrounding his whereabouts.

Ebdane, at the air base early yesterday morning to see off President Macapagal-Arroyo as she left for a brief trip to Hong Kong, turned to sarcasm when asked if it was true he had flown Garcillano out to Kota Kinabalu in Malaysia.

"*Siguro pinakamabilis na eroplano yung nagamit natin, isang oras balikan* (Maybe we had used the fastest airplane. In one hour, we were able to make a round trip)," he said in a radio interview.

Ebdane blamed the opposition for the report about his supposed Kota Kinabalu trip.

"It started with text messaging around noon, and those from the other side did it," he said. "The truth of the matter is I am having LBM [loose bowel movement] up to now."

EBDANE / A6

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Bicol region, Visayas and Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: CYRIL L. BONABENTE, PDI RESEARCH/06/21/05

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

Second FrontPage

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Aussies confirm covert ops in RP

AUSTRALIAN police said they had been engaged for nearly a year in a covert operation to crush extremist networks in the Philippines in an effort to stop the spread of terrorism in the region.

Australian Federal Police have been working in the Philippines since it called for assistance following the bombing of a ferry in Manila Bay in February 2004 which killed more than 100 people, police said in a statement.

"The AFP (Australian Federal Police) can confirm it currently has members deployed to the Philippines to assist in a counter-terrorist capacity," it said.

Police refused to comment on operational details. Reports said Monday that the Australians had been investigating links between the Abu Sayyaf kidnapping group, regional terror network Jemaah Islamiyah and another group known as Rajah Sulaiman.

Their work has uncovered and thwarted a plot to carry out a Madrid-style bombing of Manila's train system, the Daily Telegraph said.

Police also worked on the island of Mindanao to track senior members of terror groups and conducted forensic investigations into the 2004 ferry fire which determined it was caused by a small bomb planted by Abu Sayyaf members, the paper said.

"This is one of the most significant things we have ever done overseas," the paper quoted a senior police officer as saying.

Started last year

"We have investigators and forensic and explosive specialists helping fight terrorism before it spreads further into the region including Australia.

"We have had teams go to other countries to help in an investigation before... but not be based there."

Australian officials said the program started on July 1 last year and served "strictly to assist and cooperate with the PNP (Philippine National Police), and is only one of many deployments providing assistance to regional counterparts as requested."

Bomb experts

The contingent included forensic and technical experts, bomb technicians, investigators, analysts and intelligence officers, it said.

"There is not necessarily a permanent base or presence of the [Australian Federal Police] in the Philippines," police said in the statement.

"However, the [Australian Federal Police] is committed to providing long term and comprehensive assistance to the PNP and other regional partners to investigate and combat terrorism in the region."

A Philippine military spokesman, Lt. Col. Buenaventura Pascual, said Australian forces were not involved in military operations against the Jemaah Islamiyah or Abu Sayyaf.

The conservative government of Prime Minister John Howard has deployed police or troops to Pacific nations, including the Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea, in a bid to prevent them from becoming havens for terrorists and organized crime.

With Indonesia, too

Australian police also worked closely with Indonesian officers in the wake of the bombings on the resort island of Bali in 2002 in which 202 people died, 88 of them Australian.

Given this history and the fact that networks such as Jemaah Islamiyah are spread over Southeast Asia, the Australian deployment to the Philippines should come as no surprise, said Andrew Tan of the Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies in Singapore.

"These links extend transnationally and if Australian police have been interested in these matters..., they certainly couldn't restrict themselves to only operating in Indonesia," he said.

Instead, they would have to extend to the Philippines, Malaysia and Singapore, he said.

Australia has signed counter-terrorism agreements with 12 countries, including the Philippines, Malaysia, Pakistan and India.

Limited assistance

Philippine police authorities confirmed that Australian experts had been in the country helping local police in the fight against terrorism.

But this help was limited to lending expertise and training, senior Philippine police officials said.

"They were here to assist us, [lending their] forensic experts in the Valentine's Day bombing investigation," Chief Supt. Ismael Rafanan said.

"They have left already," he said.

Rafanan also confirmed that Australian bomb experts had trained local policemen at the PNP Bomb Center inside Camp Crame in Quezon City. *With a report from Luige A. del Puerto*

INDONESIAN President Yudhoyono is met at the airport by top Philippine officials. ROGER MARGALLO

Indonesia, Gambia presidents arrive

By Nikko Dizon

THE PRESIDENTS of Indonesia and Gambia arrived yesterday in Manila some two hours apart for their official visits and meeting with President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Amid a light drizzle, a rainbow emerged from the gray skies as the Garuda Indonesia plane carrying Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono taxied at the airbase shortly after 4 p.m.

Yudhoyono arrived with his wife, First Lady Ani Bambang Yudhoyono, and a delegation of Indonesian government officials and were accorded planeside honors.

They were met by Vice President Noli de Castro, Foreign Affairs Secretary Alberto Romulo, and Foreign Affairs Chief of Protocol Ambassador Jose Zaide, and a small delegation from the Indonesian community led by children who waved Indonesia's red and white flag.

At around 5:40 p.m., Gambian President Yahya A.J.J. Jammeh arrived at Villamor Airbase and was given planeside honors as well.

Vice President De Castro and Romulo met the Gambian President, who held an ethnic scepter, which is a symbol of authority in The Gambia.

Yudhoyono's trip to Manila is part of his introductory Southeast Asian tour after winning the presidential elections in October last year.

On the other hand, Jammeh is the first African president to visit Manila under the Arroyo administration.

On top of the agenda of the visits are the two countries' economic relations with the Philippines.

Presidents Arroyo and Yudhoyono are also expected to discuss the two countries' counter-terrorism efforts.

Romulo said Indonesia and The Gambia are supportive of the Philippines' bid for an observer status in the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC).

In a meeting, Gambian Foreign Minister Bala-Gaye told Romulo that his country has called on other West African OIC members to support the Philippine's application.

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SC says Erap withholding of P10B in IRA illegal

By Armand N. Nocum

THE SUPREME Court has declared as illegal the Estrada administration's decision to withhold P10 billion of the P111.7 billion allocated for the Internal Revenue Allotment in the country's budget for year 2000.

In a June 8 decision penned by Justice Conchita Carpio Morales, the high court said that the Constitution mandates that the Executive department automatically release the Internal Revenue Allotment, or the local government's share in the national taxes, and prohibits the legislature from passing laws impeding it.

The case stemmed from the decision of top officials in the government of ousted President Estrada to appropriate P111.7 billion as "programmed fund" for the IRA under the 2000 General Appropriations Act (GAA), but appropriated another P10 billion of the IRA as "unprogrammed fund."

Estrada administration officials then declared that the P10 billion can only be released if the original revenue targets submitted by the President to Congress can be realized based on a quarterly assessment to be conducted by certain committees specified under the GAA.

The decision prompted several non-government organizations and barangay officials to file a petition for certiorari, prohibition and mandamus against former Executive Secretary Ronaldo Zamora, then Budget Secretary Benjamin Diokno, National Treasurer Leonor Briones, among others, before the high tribunal.

They also questioned the constitutionality of the 2000 GAA, specifically the provisions on the allocations to the local government units and the unprogrammed funds.

In siding with the petitioners, the high court said that the Constitution is clear on the fact that "local government units shall have a just share, as determined by law, in the national taxes which shall be automatically released to them."

The court said this provision only allows Congress to "determine by law" the just share of the local government units, and not whether the amount shall be released to them or not.

Although events have already overcome the issue, the 2000 GAA having been spent, the court said it still ruled on the issue because it was "impressed with public interest."

DOJ issues subpoenas to agri chief, dad for tax evasion raps

THE DEPARTMENT of Justice (DOJ) yesterday issued subpoenas to Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap and his father Domingo to answer charges of tax evasion filed against them by the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) last week.

This developed as Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez assured that there will be no whitewash on the matter, which is considered a landmark case as this is the first time that a Cabinet secretary has been charged under the government's Run After Tax Evaders (RATE) program.

"This is the worst time to play favorites. We are not that naïve," said Gonzalez when asked whether Yap or the President have called him in relation to the case.

The government is right now under siege following the surfacing of audio tapes showing the President allegedly talking with those suspected to have rigged the last elections.

The First Family has also come under fire for their alleged links with the illegal numbers game of jueteng.

Gonzalez said while they will speed up the procedure of finding whether there is probable cause, they will treat Yap's case "like any other case."

"We will look at it on the basis of the evidence presented by the BIR," he told the INQUIRER in a telephone interview.

Yesterday, State Prosecutor Sebastian Caponong issued subpoenas to the Yaps, ordering them to appear before the DOJ for a preliminary investigation on the case on July 5 and 7.

The Yaps have been accused of allegedly evading the payment of P4 million in taxes when the family-owned DHY Realty and Development Inc. – here Arthur Yap used to seat as vice president and his father president – bought a P20 million property from a Carlota Mendoza for P20 million in 1997.

The BIR has claimed that the Yaps allegedly came out with a questionable deed of sale, showing that the purchase amount was P1 million, for which they paid only P18,750 in taxes.

Yap earlier denied any involvement in the sale, saying that it was the firm that made the purchase and that it should have been the seller who should have paid the taxes.

But in a letter to Commissioner Guillermo Parayno, which sources furnished the INQUIRER, tax informant Moreno de Villa said that it was Secretary Yap who signed the deed of sale dated Feb. 27, 1998, wherein Yap allegedly made it appear that the lot was bought for P1 million, not P20 million.

He also cited court records showing that the Yap agreed to foot the bill for the taxes, provided the seller agrees to make it appear that the lot was bought for a lesser value.

"The government was clearly cheated and defrauded by DHY through Arthur Yap," De Villa told Parayno.

De Villa also accused the Yaps of making three deeds of sale in an effort to allegedly evade the payment of correct taxes. The young Yap signed two deeds of sale, while his father signed one.

Cops reenact payoff to Doble

By Luige A. del Puerto

POLICE officers investigating the alleged illegal detention of the military intelligence officer said to be the source of controversial tapes rocking the Arroyo administration yesterday began a reenactment of his ordeal based on his account.

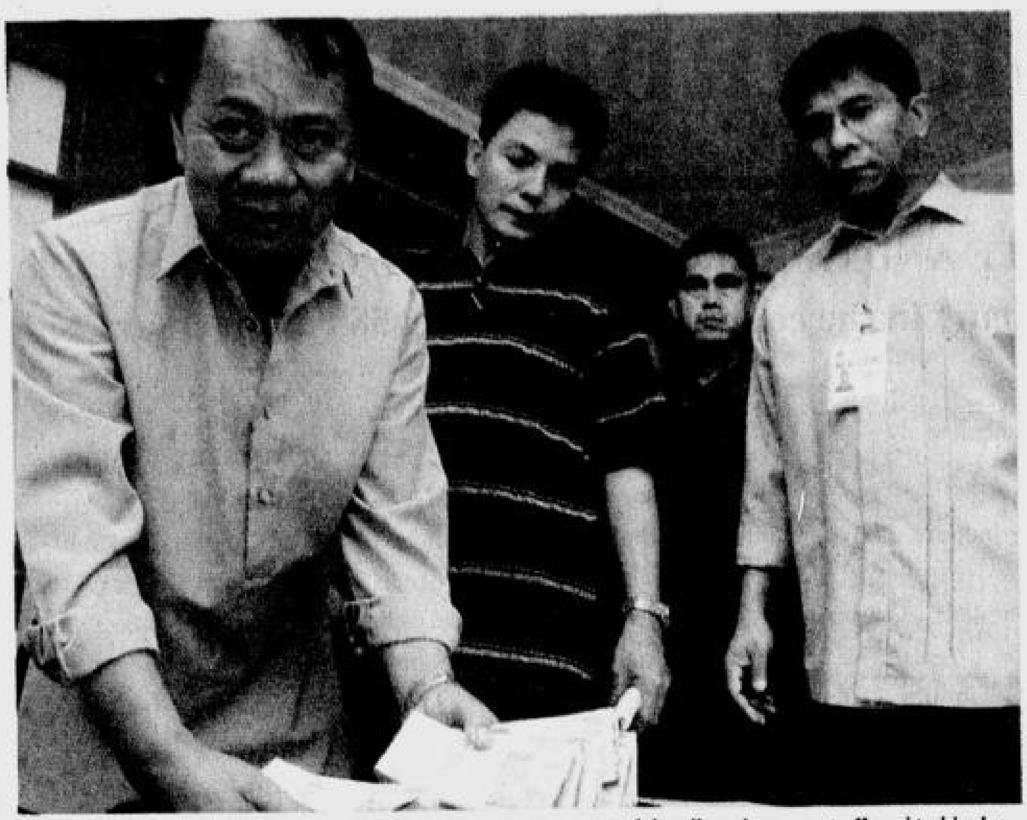
But contrary to expectations, TSgt. Vidal Doble was passive and tight-lipped during the reenactment, content to answer queries posed by the case's chief investigator, Senior Supt. Asher Dolina, with a simple "yes" or "no" or with brief explanations.

Last Friday, Philippine National Police Director General Arturo Lomibao disclosed that ex-starlet Laarni Enriquez, mistress of ousted President Joseph Estrada, provided P2 million to Doble after the intelligence agent "appeared in a scripted authentication (of the tapes) covered by an audio-video recording" in a room at a hotel in Quezon City.

Lomibao claimed that the P2 million was given to Doble by lawyer Samuel Ong, two months before Ong announced that he had the "mother of all tapes" containing alleged wiretapped conversations between President Macapagal-Arroyo and former election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano.

Police are now investigating claims by Doble's wife Arlene that the sergeant was detained against his will by Ong's camp at the San Carlos seminary two weeks ago. But yesterday's reenactment did not include the alleged illegal detention at the seminary.

In his first public appearance since being released from the San Carlos seminary last week, Doble appeared composed, but did not volunteer information.



TSGT. VIDAL Doble (second from left) during the reenactment of the alleged payment offered to him by Ong, played by an unidentified policeman (left). JOAN BONDOC

He showed investigators the Borromeo Grill on Scout Borromeo Street in Quezon City where he claimed he, his brother Reynaldo, and his female companion Marietta Santos met Ong, his trusted aide Lito Santiago, and another man he described as "Chinese-looking."

Santos and Reynaldo Doble were present during the reenactment and corroborated the sergeant's version of events. It was also the two's first public appearance since their names cropped up in the case.

Doble said his meeting with Ong's group at the restaurant took place between 8 a.m. and 9 a.m. at an unspecified date in April.

The Borromeo Grill usually opened at 2 p.m., an employee told the INQUIRER. Investigators noted that Ong or the "Chinese-looking" male appeared to have been allowed the run of the restaurant because they were allowed entry that early.

"We assume that he (the "Chinese-looking male") is familiar with the place. Maybe he lived somewhere here because he looked fresh from the shower," Dolina said.

Dolina said if needed, police would summon the owner of the restaurant to help in the investigation.

Doble said Ong played a tape to him at the restaurant.

Then he heard or was told that they had a reservation in a hotel and that they were to go there.

After staying for about an hour at the restaurant, Doble and Ong went to the Imperial Hotel on Timog Avenue, which was a few blocks away. They rode in separate cars.

Doble was with his brother, Santos and Santiago. Ong and the Chinese-looking guy rode in another car, Doble said.

They went straight to Room No. 520 on the 5th floor of the hotel, he added.

Room 520 was occupied yesterday so investigators used room 720 for the reenactment after learning from an employee that all the rooms had the same layout.

This was what happened according to the reenactment:

Once inside, Ong opened a black bag containing the cash and spread photos of the members of Doble's family and their "profile."

He and Doble went inside a small bedroom in the room and discussed the payment.

Here Ong supposedly offered him the P2 million, and when he initially refused, threatened him and his family with harm.

Sometime during their stay in the hotel, Ong told Doble that the money was from Enriquez, with whom Estrada has three children.

Doble finally agreed to do what Ong asked. The lawyer then scribbled notes on a sheet of paper and gave it to Doble to read.

Lito Santiago recorded Doble's "performance" with a video camera.

The police are now trying to answer few key questions, according to Supt. Edgardo Wycoco, chief of the criminal investigation unit of the Central Police District.

One, who made the reservation at the Imperial Hotel?

Two, who was the "Chinese-looking" male with Ong?

"We're trying to answer these questions," Wycoco said.

Dolina himself said it was too early to make an assessment of the usefulness of the reenactment.

Laarni starts fund campaign to verify tape

ACTRESS Laarni Enriquez yesterday began a fund raising campaign to finance an independent authentication of the alleged wiretapped conversation of President Macapagal-Arroyo with former Commission on Elections Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano.

Enriquez, one of the mistresses of deposed President Joseph Estrada, told the INQUIRER that she would contribute P1,000 from her own pocket as a start. She said the money should be sent to Bishop Ted Bacani, to whom former NBI deputy director Samuel Ong said he gave the original copies of the tapes.

"We have to authenticate the taped conversation or Ms Arroyo could just admit that she was the voice in the recorded conversation," said Enriquez, who has three children fathered by Estrada.

Authentication of the wiretapped conversation by voice experts could cost at least P250,000, according to Enriquez.

Enriquez expressed willingness to participate in any official inquiry on the wiretapped conversation provided Ms Arroyo is also present. She said she is not the subject of the controversy but Ms Arroyo.

She also laughed off charges that she is involved in any attempt to destabilize the administration saying that the allegations were "old administration tunes."

Director General Arturo Lomibao, Philippine National Police director, last week linked Enriquez to the controversial tape and its release. *Nelson Flores*

Senator tells entire Comelec to quit to restore poll trust

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

AN OPPOSITION senator yesterday called on the entire Commission on Elections to resign, saying the charges that a commissioner helped President Macapagal-Arroyo rig the 2004 elections are casting doubts on the integrity of future elections.

"The future of our democracy is at stake here… I think all the commissioners would have to resign," Sen. Sergio Osmeña III said yesterday.

Osmeña said that as a result of the Arroyo-Garcillano tapes, the people would not believe the results of future elections, including the 2007 mid-term election and the 2010 presidential elections.

"So if we have one (in 2010) what would be the credibility of the election result if they don't clean up the Comelec now? And I'm not talking about Garci(llano) alone. Garci(llano) alone could not have fixed the election results by himself, that's (the work of) a syndicate," Osmeña told reporters.

"This is not limited to Basilan, Tawi-Tawi, Sulu, Zamboanga, Lanao del Sur, Lanao del Norte, Sultan Kudarat and Maguindanao. The cheating happened all over the country. It was a well-planned, well executed (cheating)," Osmeña said.

ABALOS

Osmeña said it was fortunate that only the phone of Garcillano was tapped. "If (Comelec Chair Benjamin) Abalos' cellphone was also tapped, he would also be in trouble," he said.

Osmeña said no less than a complete overhaul of the Comelec could restore public confidence on the credibility of Philippine elections.

"What is sad is it will probably take us 20-25 years to clean up the Comelec if we start today. That's very sad for our democracy because one of the most powerful underpinnings of a democracy is freedom of choice, the right of suffrage. But if you have no choice, you have a small clique of men and women who will be dictating upon the Filipino people and nation who would be their president, vice president, senators, congressmen, mayors or governors," Osmeña said.

ARMM polls feel heat from tapes

By Jerome Aning
and Leila B. Salaverria

THE CHAIR of the Commission on Elections said he will ask six election officials in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) to inhibit themselves from the coming ARMM elections to spare the commission from accusations of partiality.

Some of the officials are assigned to areas that have been mentioned in the recorded conversations allegedly between President Macapagal-Arroyo and election commissioner Virgilio Garcillano.

Abalos said he would also meet with the officials—ARMM Comelec regional director Renato Magbutay and five election officers from Maguindanao, Lanao del Sur, Basilan, Tawi-Tawi and Sulu, in his office in Manila on Wednesday.

"I will ask them about the preparations for the elections. I'll also confront them about all these statements coming out. Yes, including that," he said, referring to the recorded conversations.

Abalos said he will ask the Comelec officials to refrain from participating in election activities like going around precincts and checking the tally of votes to avoid suspicions. He said the officials can still perform administrative functions.

"They will be sidelined for the meantime for the purposes of this election. They will not be made to participate in the coming elections," he told reporters in an interview shortly before the Kapihan sa Manila forum.

He added that his decision does not mean that he thinks the officials are guilty. He said he just wants them to stop working during the elections so that the Comelec would not be accused of partiality.

"We have to be perceived to be clean. Perception is very important," he said.

The ARMM elections are scheduled on Aug. 8.

Aside from Magbutay, also recalled to the Comelec office in Manila were Rey Sumalipao, his deputy, and Lintang Bedol, provincial elections director of Maguindanao.

Magbutay was also in charge of elections in Sulu, Tawi-tawi and Basilan while Sumalipao was in charge in Lanao del Sur.

Magbutay, Sumalipao and Bedol were scheduled to see Abalos tomorrow as the Comelec begins an internal investigation of the controversy.

"They are being removed from their positions not because they're guilty of what the people perceive. What we want is to ensure that the ARMM elections will not be doubted again," he told reporters.

The audiotapes contained wiretapped conversation between Ms Arroyo and Garcillano supposedly discussing how to cheat in last year's presidential elections.

Abalos denied that there would be an overhaul or general reshuffle in the ARMM regional offices of the Comelec.

On Aug. 8, voters in the ARMM will elect a governor, vice governor and members of the regional legislative assembly.

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Philamlife Celebrates 58 years of Strength, Stability and Trust

THE PHILIPPINE AMERICAN LIFE AND GENERAL INSURANCE COMPANY (Philamlife), the largest and most diversified insurance company in the country, celebrates its 58th anniversary today, June 21, 2005.

With its theme: "Celebrating 58 Years of Building and Sustaining Relationships," the company marks another year with a showcase of strength, stability and trustworthiness that have made Philamlife a household name among Filipinos.

The company's recent financial performance attests to this: it posted P12.3 billion in total premium income in 2004, a strong 21% growth versus 2003, and gross revenues and total assets reached record highs of P20.8 billion and P88.9 billion, respectively.

The company's new business likewise grew significantly by 48% in 2004, principally from bancassurance operations (which contributed P1.2 billion total premiums), agency sales growth in Metro Manila and the provinces, and significant sales performances of key market segments, including high net worth, Filipino–Chinese and Overseas Filipino Worker (OFW) markets.

Net investment income (NII), excluding equity income from non-traditional investments and realized capital gains, reached P7.46 billion. Net income amounted to P2.9 billion. The company paid P1.4 billion in taxes in 2004.

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Philamlife further strengthens its leadership position by consistently ranking No. 1 in the industry in terms of revenues, premiums, assets, investments and net income. As the market leader for over half a century, Philamlife has faithfully delivered on its promises to generations of Filipino families. In 2004, P4.7 billion in benefits were paid to policyholders, representing a 24% increase versus the previous year. Scholar education benefits paid amounted to P274.3 Million, or 27% higher compared to 2003. The company also recently released P165 Million representing Philamlife's scholar education benefits, the first tranche of benefits to be released this year. Since 2000, over P1 billion worth of benefits have been paid to Philamlife Scholar policyholders.

Local Trust, Worldwide Recognition

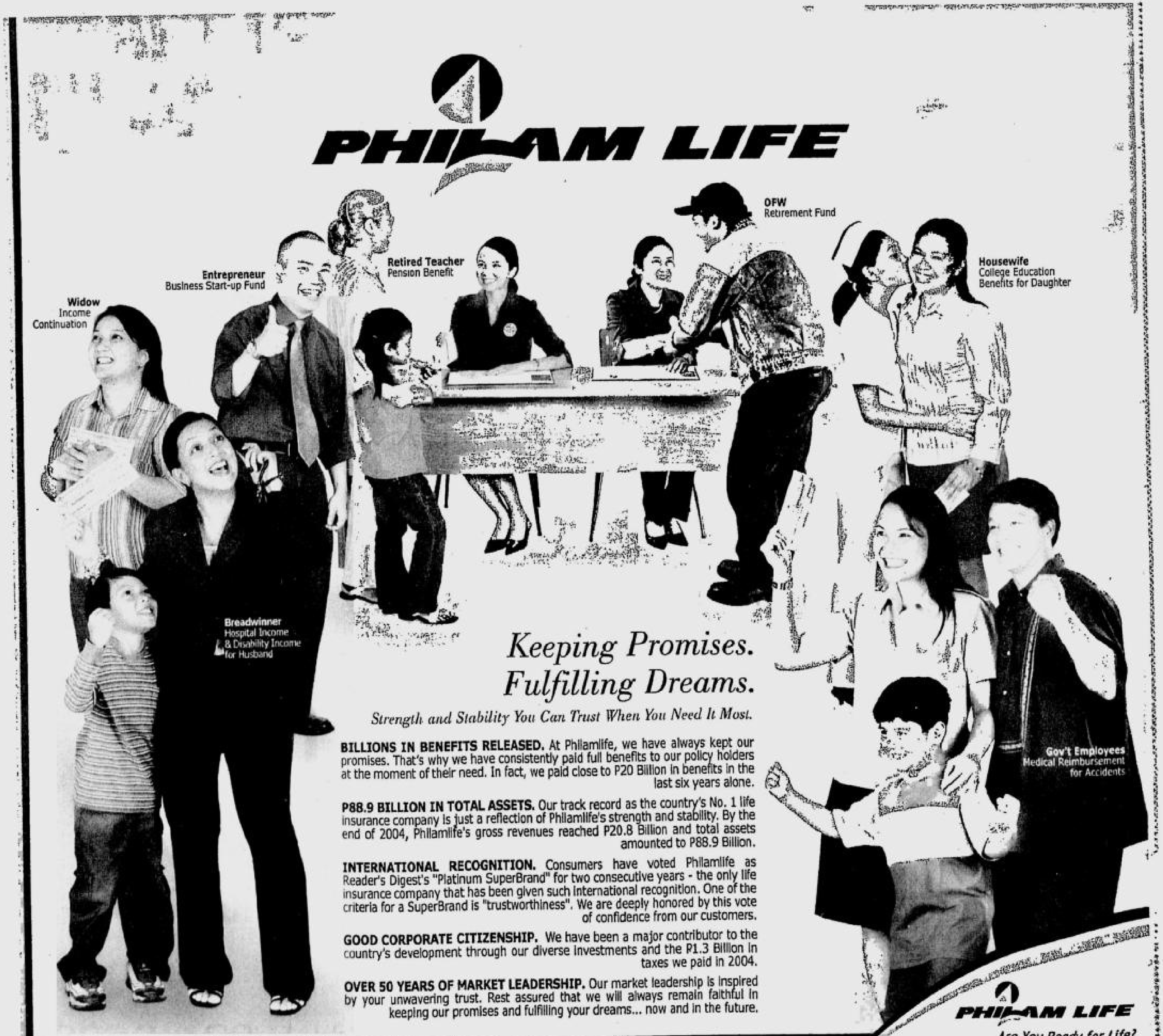
The company's very strong performance is a clear proof of the continuing high level of trust that it enjoys in the market. This has been reinforced by the accolades the company has received over the years. In 2005, Philamlife has again been named a "Platinum SuperBrand" according to the prestigious Reader's Digest Asia's SuperBrands Survey. The company is the only life insurer in the country to have been accorded "Platinum SuperBrand" status for the second straight year. Among the criteria for the award were trustworthiness, quality and value of products and services, strong image, and understanding of customer needs.

Philamlife also became the first life insurer worldwide to be awarded the Life Office Management Association's Excellence in Education Award for employee and management training for the tenth year.

Among the company's activities this anniversary week are: a Thanksgiving Mass, an employee recognition program for service and special awardees and a fellowship day.

Global Partnership

Philamlife is a member company of American International Group (AIG), the world's leading international insurance and financial services organization, the largest underwriter of commercial and industrial insurance in the United States, and among the top-ranked US life insurers.



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2 new 'jueteng' witnesses getting threats, says bishop

By Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

DAGUPAN CITY—Lingayen-Dagupan Archbishop Oscar Cruz said the two new witnesses set to appear Friday at the Senate hearing on jueteng may not show up as they had received "threats and intimidation."

Cruz, national chair of the Krusadang Bayan Laban sa Jueteng, said "There are more and more efforts exerted on the witnesses. Until they are physically present on the day of the hearing, which is Friday, I do not know if they will come or not."

Cruz earlier said he would present eight witnesses at the joint hearings of the Senate committees on public order and games, chaired by Senators Manuel Villar and Manuel "Lito" Lapid, respectively. He had already presented four witnesses namely, Wilfredo Mayor, Richard Garcia, Demosthenes Abraham Riva and Sandra Cam.

The archbishop said the two new witnesses had received threats that if they testify, "they would be charged with defamation, libel and perjury," the same cases filed against the four other witnesses.

The Senate granted witnesses Cam and Garcia immunity from legal suits but cases had been filed against them, Cruz said.

"The immunity will be tested before the Supreme Court. What is the (immunity's) content and how far does it go?" he added.

He also said that the two witnesses had been identified before their scheduled appearance on Friday.

"This was the difficulty of Sandra Cam even before she came into the open to testify. This was also the difficulty of the three witnesses who spoke (on) television on condition of anonymity but somehow, their identities were known even before the Senate hearings," Cruz said.

He said he had made sure that the two new witnesses would not be known to the public or to the media before giving their testimony.

"But for one reason or another, certain enterprising individuals had identified them already, and therefore, these pressures, these intimidation, are now being exerted on them," Cruz said.

The archbishop said he would understand if the two witnesses changed their minds about giving testimony because they were both family men.

"The question is always 'What happens after they testify?' They are burning bridges. Where will they go? What will they have? What jobs can they get? They'll be marked people. As a priest I am more concerned about their families, their children who could end up innocent victims of their testimonies," Cruz said.

INT'L ADVERTISING FESTIVAL

RP ads on Cannes Lions shortlist

By Angel V. Guerrero
Contributor

THE Palais des Festivals venue of the 52nd Cannes Advertising Festival.

ONCE AGAIN, Philippine ads made the shortlist of the Print and Media Lions at the prestigious Cannes International Advertising Festival held on June 19 to 25 in Cannes, France.

The festival is the only annual gathering of the world's advertising, creative, direct marketing, interactive, film, radio, media and marketing communities. Participants see over 5,000 commercials, 10,000 outdoor and press ads, 1,700 websites and online ads, 900 media solutions and 1,400 direct marketing entries.

The 2005 edition of the Cannes Lions has attracted a record 20,102 entries from 81 countries in the following categories: TV/cinema, print, outdoor, online, radio and integrated advertising, as well as the best media and direct marketing solutions.

Consistent Philippine Cannes Lions shortlister, BBDO Guerrero Ortega, headed by David Guerrero, led the pack with three print shortlists for the public service Childhope Asia "Bed," "Pool" and "TV" print ads.

Procter & Gamble Philippines reaped two finalists. One, for Hemisphere Leo Burnett's Perla Detergent "Lean on Me" print work (which should please the agency's creative head Richard Irvine), and two, for Ace-Saatchi & Saatchi's Safeguard soap "Hand" print work, created by creative director Eugene Demata.

TBWA Santiago Mangada Puno, another consistent Cannes finalist, also made it with their work for Anvil Painkiller entitled "Man."

In the Media Lions shortlist, Procter & Gamble Philippines scored two nominations produced by media agency Starcom for the successful Rejoice Reviving Shampoo's "Song and Dance" media campaign. The submission was a finalist in the Best Use of TV category and a finalist in the Best Use of Mixed Media category.

According to Emily Abrera, chairman emeritus of McCann-Erickson, and a juror in the 2005 Cannes Lions' 25-member international Press and Outdoor jury, the shortlist or the top 3 percent, was pruned from some 11,366 entries.

Historically, Philippine ads only make it to the shortlist at Cannes. This year, expectations to win a trophy are high with a surprisingly strong presence from the Philippines including first-ever Filipino clients registered as delegates: Jun Vivar, VP of United Laboratories and Pauline Lao, country media manager of Procter & Gamble Philippines.

The Philippines is also represented by its biggest delegation to date with agency heads and creative directors led by the Philippine Daily Inquirer, Cannes Lions' official festival country representative.

Other members of the delegation are: Mariles Gustilo, president and CEO, Lowe Philippines; Patricia Arches, president and CEO of McCann-Erickson; David Guerrero, chairman and chief creative officer, BBDO Guerrero Ortega; Jimmy Santiago, managing partner, TBWA Santiago Mangada Puno; Melvin Mangada, executive creative director, TBWA Santiago Mangada Puno; Teeny Gonzales, VP and executive creative director, Harrison Communications; Roger Pe, executive creative director, DDB Philippines; Irene Panganiban VP and managing director, Brand Benefits Advertising; Renato Reinoso, SVP for sales and marketing, Philippine Daily Inquirer; Felipe Olarte, VP for advertising, Philippine Daily Inquirer; Tanke Tankeko, creative director of TBWA Santiago Mangada Puno; Raoul Panes, creative director, BBDO Guerrero Ortega; Frances Posa, creative group head of Lowe Philippines; Joel Limchoc, head of art, BBDO Guerrero Ortega; Raymond Armedilla, art director, Ace Saatchi & Saatchi.

The delegation is joined by the country's first junior tandem competing at the Cannes Young Creative Competition, namely Carlos Antonio Jimenez, copywriter and Juan Benjamin Berdin Jr., art director of JimenezBasic.

The Philippine contenders at the 2005 Cannes Lions totaled 125 entries, with 25 submissions in the Film/TV category; 73 in Press and Outdoor; four in Cyber; 7 in Media; two in Direct; and 16 in Radio, a new category in the competition.

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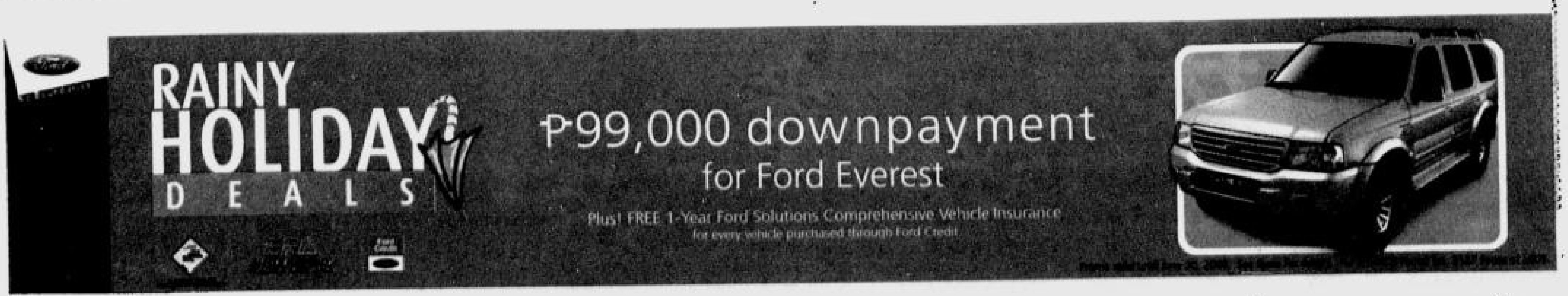

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Ebdane presence at air base undercuts claim of flight

From page A1

Earlier, former Sen. Francisco Tatad said Ebdane escorted Garcillano out of the country on Saturday so that the ex-election commissioner could not implicate Ms Arroyo in the alleged wiretapped conversations dealing with a supposed conspiracy to rig the results of the May 2004 elections.

As of yesterday afternoon, Ebdane has yet to report to his office at the Department of Public Works and Highways.

The INQUIRER dialed his cell phone number a number of times but whoever was holding the unit turned it off after several rings.

No record of flight

Bureau of Immigration Commissioner Alipio Fernandez Jr. said the agency had no records that would show that Garcillano had left the country.

Fernandez said he asked BI officials assigned at various air and sea ports, especially those in Mindanao, to check their records after reports broke out that Garcillano had left Cagayan de Oro City for Malaysia on a private Learjet.

"Our records check revealed that no passenger named Virgilio Garcillano left the country last Saturday and Sunday, either aboard a commercial airline or a private jet," Fernandez said in a statement.

He said the bureau kept records of all persons who leave the country—including those who take chartered flights—because it was its duty to ensure that all travelers were documented.

He also said a passenger leaving for abroad needed to have his passport stamped by immigration officers. If the passenger failed to accomplish this, he would be refused entry at his port of destination, he added.

Fernandez also said that should the former Commission on Elections official decide to leave the Philippines, he would not be banned from doing so.

"We have not received any request or instructions from other government agencies to put him in our watch list or hold-departure list," he said.

When the INQUIRER went to check if Garcillano or any member of his family was in his house in Cagayan de Oro's RER Subdivision yesterday, the househelp said Garcillano's wife Grace had left for the family's farm in Bukidnon.

But the neighbor said the house would be sold soon. He said Garcillano was planning to transfer to a posh subdivision along Masterson Avenue in Upper Balulang.

Malacañang in the dark?

Garcillano is said to own two lots at Xavier Estates, an enclave of Cagayan de Oro's elite. Lots at the picturesque subdivision overlooking the Cagayan de Oro River are valued at P4,600-P6,800 per square meter.

Officials of A Brown Company Inc., the real estate developer of the subdivision, refused to divulge lot-owner information when called by the INQUIRER.

A Brown officials said it was company policy to treat information regarding residents and lot owners as privileged.

Malacañang was also no help to reporters.

"We do not speak for him," said Gabriel Claudio, Ms Arroyo's political adviser.

Claudio said Garcillano was "not part of the bureaucracy per se." He also said he had no idea where Garcillano was.

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez yesterday advised Garcillano to face congressional investigations into the so-called GMA Tapes.

In an interview, Gonzalez also said that although Garcillano was not facing any case in court, the House panels investigating the issue could order his arrest should he refuse to comply with its summons.

"A person should be man enough to face the music," Gonzalez said.

According to Gonzalez, talk about Garcillano leaving the country would not help the former Comelec official "because there is presumption of guilt in flight."

"By leaving, he is creating the impression that he is guilty. In the minds of many people when you disappear, you're in hiding, and when you're in hiding, there is a presumption that you have something to hide," he told the INQUIRER.

Asked whether the same principle would apply to the President, who had refused to talk about the tape, Gonzalez replied: "Silence is not necessarily an indication of guilt. For example, if you just don't want to dignify something, you can opt to say nothing."

Laarni on watch list?

Although Garcillano's decision not to talk is a "personal thing ... maybe it is good for his image to stay around," he said.

Even if Garcillano had already denied being the man talking to the President on the tape, Gonzalez said Garcillano should be man enough to face investigation bodies.

Gonzalez admitted that his office planned to put Garcillano and even Laarni Enriquez, a mistress of deposed President Joseph Estrada, on the watch list.

Police have claimed that Enriquez was the source of the money allegedly used to bribe an intelligence officer to say that the controversial tape came from him. Enriquez has vehemently denied the allegation: *With reports from Christine O. Avendaño and Armand N. Nocum*

Time not appropriate to speak on tape—GMA

From page A1

lege, saying the tape issue involves national security concerns.

"If, as the opposition claims, the military has allegedly tapped the President's phone, then this controversy involves sensitive national security secrets," she said. Santiago said the President was not denying the tape because "doing so would remove the basis for investigating the military for possible illegal wiretapping."

In spite of the legal questions raised, the lawmakers are hopeful that the inquiry would help in legislating remedies on the issue that has sparked calls for Ms Arroyo's resignation.

The wiretapping controversy broke out on June 10 when Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye revealed Malacañang had a copy of the alleged recording of the President's telephone conversation with a man who the opposition later identified as Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano. Bunye said the recording was doctored as part of an opposition plot to unseat Ms Arroyo.

Alan Paguia, a former lawyer of deposed President Joseph Estrada, and Samuel Ong, a former deputy chief of the National Bureau of Investigation, subsequently surfaced separately with claims they have original copies of the wiretap.

They said the tapes showed the President was pressing for a one million vote lead over her closest rival, the late movie actor Fernando Poe Jr.

Garcillano has said he is not the male speaker in the wiretap.

Subpoena for Garcillano

Lawmakers yesterday asked the justice department to subpoena the election official to show up in the inquiry and to bar him from leaving the country. Garcillano's whereabouts is not known. His testimony is regarded as crucial in establishing the wiretap's authenticity.

Bunye and NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco have confirmed their attendance in today's hearing. Also lined up to appear were Lt. Col. Pedro Sumayo Jr., chief of the Military Intelligence Group 21 Unit, and Lt. Col. Allen Capuyan, operations chief of the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (Isafp).

Parañaque Rep. Roilo Golez said that while AFP Deputy Chief of Staff Rear Adm. Tirso Danga had also been invited, Sumayo and Capuyan's testimonies would be important since they worked "at the operational level" while Danga was Isafp chief.

Golez has said Danga played a central role in the drama.

Two of the nation's foremost constitutional experts—Fr. Joaquin Bernas and Raul Pangalangan—have agreed to appear in the hearing.

Golez, chair of the House defense committee, said all the versions of the tape could be played if personalities whose conversations were allegedly tapped were not identified. He said this should be subject to guidelines by the National Telecommunications Commission.

Guidelines

"We can adopt the same guidelines in the meantime because there are so many things there that we can review in aid of legislation. For example, the dynamics of electoral fraud. There are so many things that we can study in order to improve the electoral process," he said.

Remulla, chair of the House public information committee that will lead the investigation, said Golez's suggestion could be done but this should be approved first by all the five committees involved in the inquiry.

Golez said he expected his colleagues to question Bunye on how he got hold of the audio tapes and why he backtracked about his initial admission that it was the President's voice on the tape.

Golez downplayed calls from his colleagues in the administration camp for the investigation to stop because it was allegedly unconstitutional. He said the hearing was unanimously agreed on by members of the five House committees.

Dynamics of legislation

"That is part of the dynamics of legislation, which is a collegial exercise. [But] it does not mean that just because they would like to block it, it would be blocked already," he added.

Golez said the administration camp had not pressured its members, who are the majority in the House, to block the investigation.

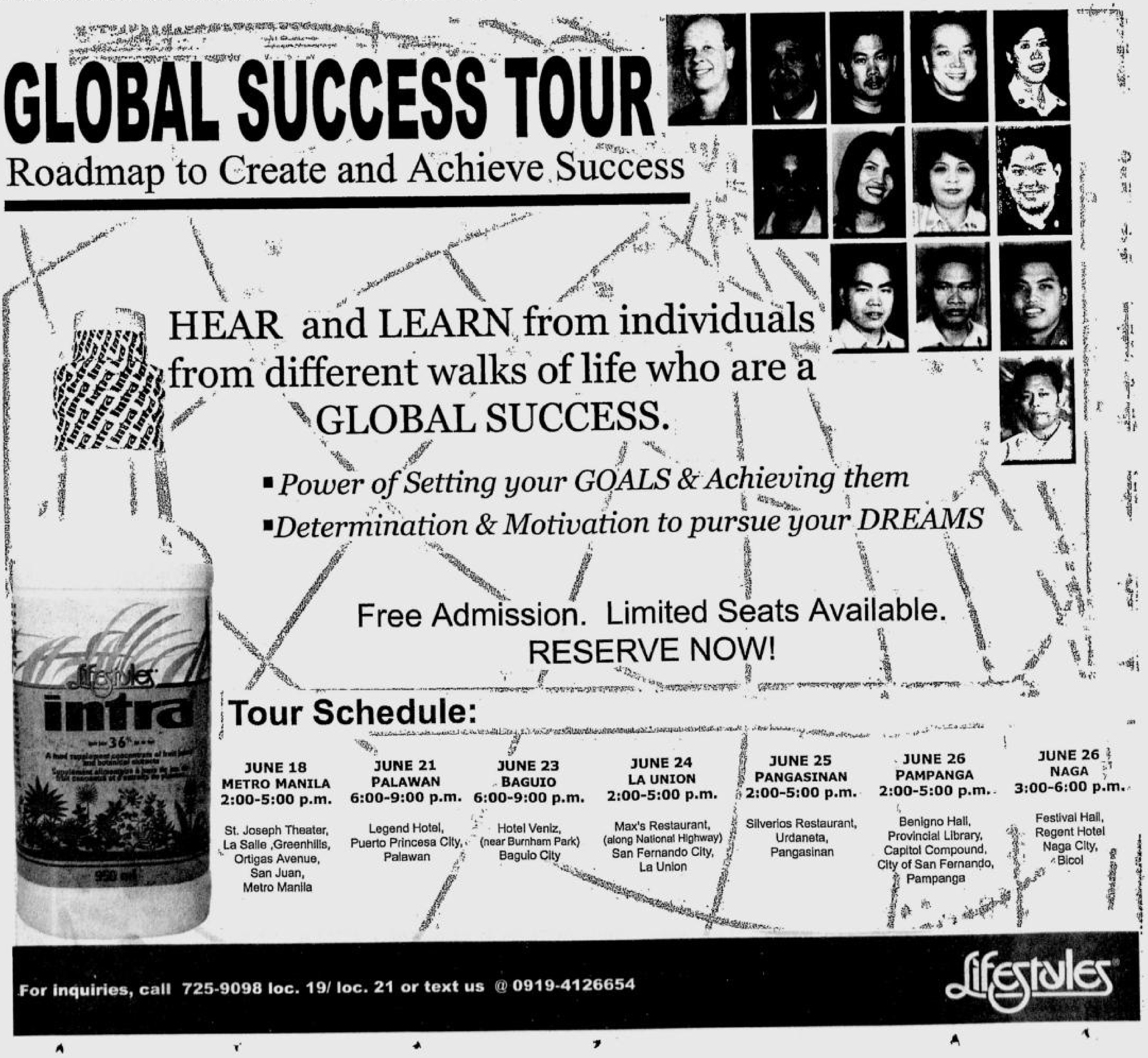
He said he had spoken with Speaker Jose de Venecia, who was in France. "He told me that we should be transparent and at the same time be conscious of what is right," he said.

De Venecia said the lawmakers "should make sure that this does not (turn) into a circus. That is why we have this call for sobriety and circumspection," according to Golez.

Remulla said the letter to the President simply requested that she comment on the case.

"I'm still hopeful that the President will respond, because I think it is for everybody's good. I feel this is for the best of the President. I don't think it is good advice to advise her to keep quiet about this. I feel the the better advice is for her to level with the people," he said.

"It will be up to her to response. It may be a response coming from her, a response from the President's spokesperson (Bunye) or maybe from Executive Secretary (Eduardo Ermita)," he added. *With reports from Juliet Labog-Javellana, Jerome Aning, Michael Lim Ubac and Leila B. Salaverria in Manila; JB Deveza and Grace Cantal-Albasin, PDI Mindanao Bureau; and Marlon Ramos and Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*



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St. Joseph Theater, La Salle ,Greenhills, Ortigas Avenue, San Juan, Metro Manila	Legend Hotel, Puerto Princesa City, Palawan	Hotel Veniz, (near Burnham Park) Baguio City	Max's Restaurant, (along National Highway) San Fernando City, La Union	Silverios Restaurant, Urdaneta, Pangasinan	Benigno Hall, Provincial Library, Capitol Compound, City of San Fernando, Pampanga	Festival Hall, Regent Hotel Naga City, Bicol

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Lifestyles

Now, cars are honking, 'Hello! Hello! Garci!'

From page A1

ipino culture.

"It does not speak well of our culture. What we do is make something ugly, uglier," said Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez upon learning that the audio of the President allegedly talking with an election official is now trumpeted by some cars in Metro Manila.

"If you feel for your country, even if it is not beautiful, you do not make it ugly," he said in reply to a question on whether all these CDs, text jokes and ring tones on the GMA tapes are making a mockery of the administration.

"It's part of destabilization," Gonzalez said of those giving away free CDs of the audio tape.

And coming soon to your neighborhood street corner: Jeepneys honking, "Hello! Hello! Garci!"

George San Mateo, spokesperson of the Pinagkaisang Samahan ng mga Tsuper at Opereytors Nationwide, said Piston was looking for ways to ride on the popularity of the controversial audio tapes.

He said some members of Piston had spoken with electricians who said they could convert the audio clip of the now pópular ring tone into a horn for the jeeps.

San Mateo said his group meant no harm and only wanted to entertain commuters.

But officials of the Land Transportation Office were not amused. LTO chief Anneli Lontoc said using the controversial audio tape as a vehicle horn was going overboard.

"Personally, I think it's distasteful. There are so many problems in land transportation and we should instead focus on that," said Lontoc.

However, the LTO would not ban the "Hello! Hello! Garci" horn unless it was too loud or deemed unfit as a horn substitute.

Into the streets

Not to be outdone, a youth alliance criticizing the President yesterday played portions of her purported wiretapped conversations with former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano around major universities in the city.

So far, it's the cheapest way to hear the popular tape. A number of websites have made transcriptions of the conversation available for download. CD versions are being sold for around P5 in areas like Quiapo and Greenhills.

First stop for the Youth Against GMA was Dapitan Street at the back of the University of Santo Tomas yesterday morning.

Students approached the group's van carrying a loud speaker to listen to the tape which allegedly showed how the President had tried to rig the 2004 election.

Wilson Requez, an official of the alliance, said the tape was a reproduction of the master copy earlier presented to the public by former National Bureau of Investigation Deputy Director Samuel Ong. The supposed "mother of all tapes" was yet to be publicly played.

Open defiance

Students were visibly curious about the alleged Arroyo-Garcillano conversation. Some even signed on a "freedom cloth" plastered on the van. Many of the messages were something Malacañang would not want to read.

From Dapitan, the group drove to the Far Eastern University on Quezon Boulevard for another listening session. The van was expected along Recto and Taft Avenues today and tomorrow.

The campaign was an open defiance to the DOJ's threat to slap criminal charges on those who would be possessing, playing or reproducing copies of the tapes.

Gloria punching bag

In the hope of knocking out the President from her seat in Malacañang, a group of militants yesterday produced a punching bag bearing Ms Arroyo's smiling face.

Later, the group that called itself the Gloria Step Down Movement (GSM) pummeled the punching bag and burned it before television cameras.

The bag, the group said, symbolized the people's desire to see Ms Arroyo knocked out of office, as accusations that she rigged the 2004 presidential elections escalated.

Composed of some 80 youth, urban poor, labor and women's organizations, the GSM said Ms Arroyo should prepare for a "storm of protests" as more Filipinos realize that she has a "fake and illegitimate" mandate.

"(Ms Arroyo) does not deserve to be called President because she is not and never was," said Froyel Yaneza, a convenor of the GSM and the secretary general of Bagong Alyansang Makabayan-NCR.

"Now that there is strong evidence of her not being the duly mandated president," Yaneza said, "the President should seriously begin thinking of stepping down."

While Ms Arroyo struggles with a record-low popularity, a simple two-word greeting attributed to her has shot to the top of the charts in this cell phone-mad country.

'Hello Garci' overload

A website offering a mobile phone ringtone featuring the words "Hello Garci" briefly crashed late last week as thousands of Filipinos clamored to download it.

Text message consumer rights group TXTpower said its site (www.txtpower.org) had been overwhelmed by demand for the clip taken from a recording of an alleged conversation between Ms Arroyo and an election official to fix the result of last year's election.

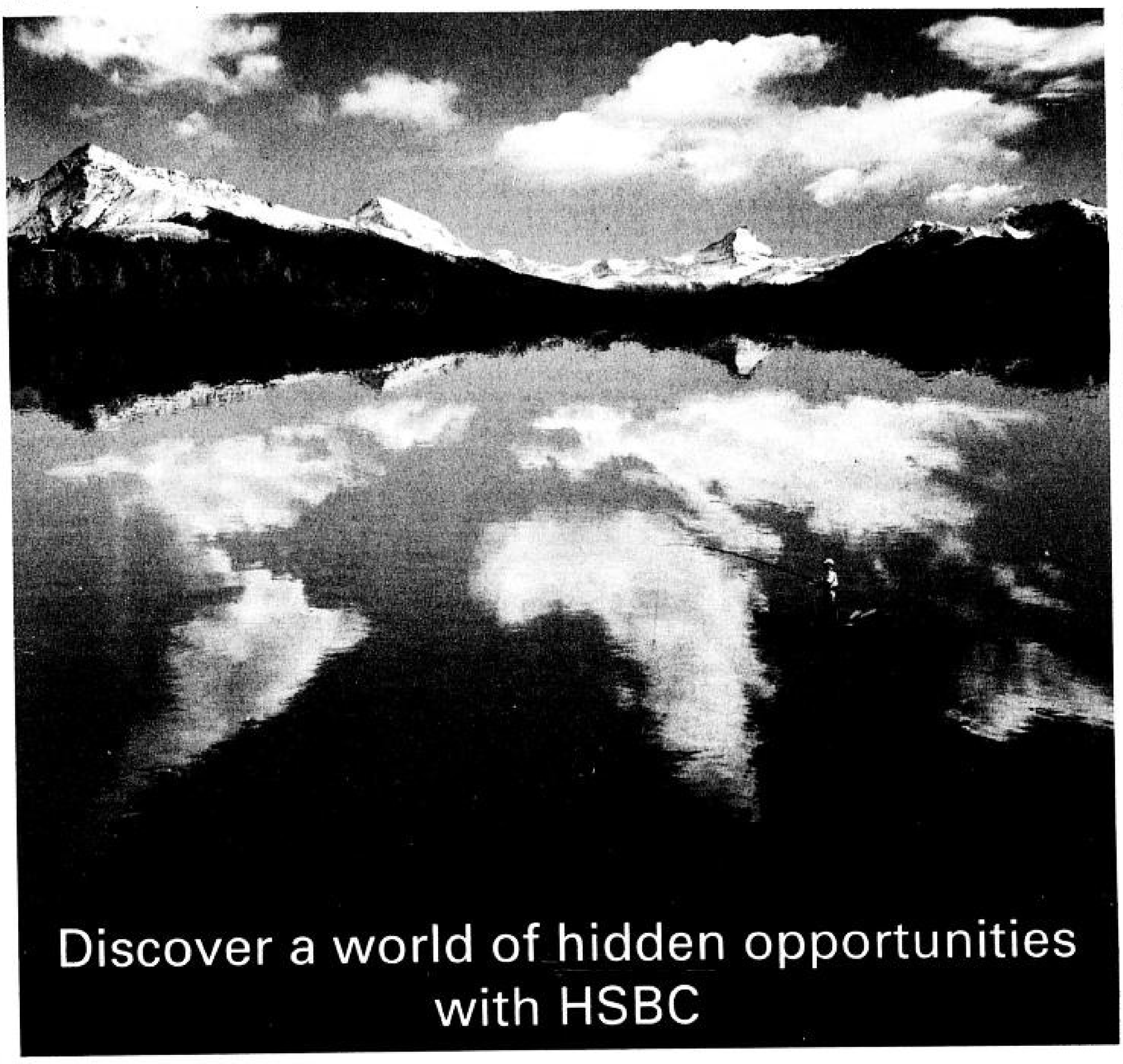
"So many users were accessing the website that the allotted bandwidth was consumed," TXTpower's Ricardo Banague said yesterday.

In the full conversation, which the government said was illegally wiretapped and then doctored, a woman who sounds like Ms Arroyo asks senior election official Garcillano whether she would win by more than 1 million votes in Mindanao.

The opposition said the recording bolstered its claim that Ms Arroyo cheated her way to election victory this year.

Banague said the site had received more than 72,000 hits since Friday, when it started offering the ringtone. It was still recording about 170 downloads an hour.

The country's 37 million mobile users, more than a third of the population, send an average of seven messages every day. *Reports from Armand N. Nocum, Clarissa S. Batino, Christian V. Esguerra and DJ Yap and Reuters*



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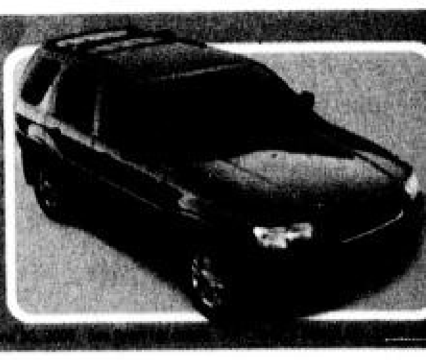


World crude prices hit all-time high, near $60

From page A1

the commodity's rise.

Nymex crude for the July contract reached the mark early afternoon in Singapore, a rise of 76 cents from Friday's close, the second straight day oil has set intraday records.

On Friday, crude climbed as high as US$58.60 per barrel before settling at US$58.47, an increase of US$1.89 on the New York Mercantile Exchange. That topped the exchange's previous intraday high of $58.28 set on April 4.

Heating oil, meanwhile, rose more than a cent to US$1.6725 a gallon, while unleaded gas futures were also up a cent to US$1.666 a gallon on Monday.

Contracts for September delivery and onward all stood above US$60.

On London's International Petroleum Exchange, Brent for July delivery leapt 77 cents to US$58.53 a barrel.

Elsewhere, oil workers in Norway, the world's third largest exporter, could begin a strike as early as Tuesday over a salary dispute that could cut a third from the country's daily output of three million barrels.

While Nymex oil futures are more than 50 percent higher than a year ago, they are still well below the inflation-adjusted high above US$90 a barrel set in 1980.

No erosion in demand

"Bulls believe the only thing that can cool the market is an erosion in demand, but so far there are no signs of this," said Energyintel analyst Matt Piotrowski. "They also focus on Opec's recent meeting as reinforcing the belief that the organization cannot cool prices."

The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries failed to soothe the market last week when it agreed to raise its daily output quota to 28 million barrels a day because its members had already been unofficially exceeding that level.

Including Iraq, which is not bound by the 11-member cartel's quota system, Opec is pumping close to 30 million barrels a day, or about 35 percent of global demand.

Analysts said that unlike last year's crude futures' record-highs, which were driven largely by concern over geopolitical events in oil-producing countries, such as Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Venezuela, this year's upward trend had more to do with speculative buying, continued supply fears and limited excess production capacity.

Confluence of factors

"This year, we've had a confluence of factors driving up this rally: first, more hedge funds are allocating money to the red-hot oil markets; second, demand is outstripping supply; and third, capacity is tight in refineries and Opec production facilities," said Victor Shum, energy analyst at Texas-headquartered Purvin & Getz.

"The oil market is prone to price spikes because of capacity tightness, and this attracts the speculators, who tend to buy on momentum," Shum said.

Analysts also said demand for distillates in the summer—gasoline for vacationing Americans and diesel for generators of small businesses in China when power shortages occur—continued to keep the market on edge.

"We saw last week's expectation being built that US refineries would struggle to meet the demand of the driving season. This is likely to provide support for the coming week," said ANZ Bank energy analyst Daniel Hynes in Melbourne, Australia.

Analysts are also concerned that aging US refineries will be unable to cope when demand peaks later in the year for winter production of heating oil, diesel and jet fuel.

Threats by militants

Crude prices on Friday soared after the United States, Britain and Germany closed their consulates in Nigeria's largest city, Lagos, due to a threat from foreign militants. Nigeria, which supplies about 10 percent of US crude imports, has been named a candidate for "liberation" by Osama bin Laden.

Hynes also said the rise in crude prices was also partly a reaction to the kidnapping of two German and four Nigerian Shell subcontractors who had been seized by gunmen on Wednesday. They were released Saturday.

The militants, a group called the Iduwuni National Union for Peace and Development, demanded Shell pay local communities US$20 million (euro16 million) as compensation for pollution and environmental degradation due to oil activities. *AP, Reuters*

Fares up; peso down to 55

From page A1

had sought a basic fare increase of P2.50 to recoup losses from rising diesel prices. Operators of non-airconditioned buses had asked for a minimum fare increase of P3.

A JEEPNEY driver gives change to a passenger as he plies his route in Manila. Starting today, jeeps and buses will charge P2 more in minimum fare.

REM ZAMORA

Peso weakens

Shortly after Bautista's announcement, the peso closed at a new five-month low against the US dollar at the Philippine Dealing System.

Amid lingering concerns over election fraud and corruption charges against the Arroyo administration, as well as rising world crude prices, the peso fell for the eighth consecutive session to 55.745, down from Friday's finish at 55.475 and its lowest close since Jan. 12. Monday's volume rose to $383 million from Friday's $319 million.

"The currency will continue to be pressured by the political uncertainty. Nobody knows where this thing will head considering all the rumors proliferating. But I think it won't be as bad as in previous years," said Jose Emmanuel Hilado, president of the foreign exchange association ACI Philippines and treasurer of BDO Private Bank.

Rovic de Guzman, head of currency trading at the Union Bank of the Philippines, said the biggest demand for dollars was coming from oil companies to hedge their immediate requirements.

"That's the prudent thing to do. Not to do so would be foolhardy," De Guzman said.

Hilado expressed confidence the peso would likely regain its strength against the dollar once political uncertainties clear.

Threat to jobs, economy

Even so, Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas yesterday said hundreds of companies might have to carry out cost-saving measures, like laying off workers, not only due to rising fuel prices but also to recent increases in the minimum wages in various regions.

Sto. Tomas said up to 300 companies had applied for a deferment in the implementation of wage orders mandating increases in the floor pay and cost-of-living allowance for workers.

Not only jobs are threatened but the entire economy as well, according to Cora Guidote, the Palace's designated spokesperson on economic matters.

Malacañang yesterday warned the public that the Philippine economy was in serious peril from the surge in world oil prices to record levels.

Guidote said the warning was not intended to divert the public's attention from the scandals hounding the Arroyo administration.

"This is really serious stuff. Oil prices at $60 per barrel will be a big blow to the Philippine economy and based on expert opinion, it could hit $70 per barrel and this will be disastrous for the country," Guidote said in a phone interview. *(See story on front page.)*

Apart from its direct impact on pump prices and electricity bills, soaring oil prices are likely to usher in another round of inflation, she said.

Any sustained increase in world oil prices beyond the $60-per-barrel mark in the next three months would punch a big hole in the country's gross international reserves, the amount of foreign exchange held by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas to facilitate the country's imports and foreign debt payments.

"Every $10 increase in crude prices over a sustained period would drain international reserves by at least $1.5 billion," Guidote said. "We might be enjoying a surplus in our balance of payments now but that can easily be wiped out by higher oil prices."

Soaring oil prices would also slow down the country's economic growth. The National Economic and Development Authority assumed an average oil price of $29 per barrel for its projected 5.3 percent to 6.3 percent growth in the gross domestic product (GDP).

The Neda estimates that a $10 increase in oil prices would slash the country's GDP growth by half a percentage point. *With reports from Jerome Aning, AFP and Reuters*

Invest in RP, Gloria urges HK businessmen

From page A1

have been made," Bunye said.

"She knows she is doing this at the same time the opposition is damaging the image of the country and trying to stop her from her efforts to strengthen the economy and create more jobs."

Led by Dr. Victor Fung, chair of the Li & Fung Group who hosted the lunch, the attendees included Andrew Brandler (group managing director of CLP Holdings), Henry Fan (managing director of Citic Pacific Ltd.), Vincent Cheng (chair of HSBC), Stuart Gulliver (head of global markets HSBC), David Turnbull (director of Swire Pacific), Ian Wade (group managing head of AS Watson), Percy Weatherall (managing director Jardine Matheson Holdings), David Wong (chair of Dah Sing Bank), Gordon Wu (chair of Hopewell Holdings) and Peter Zuellig (chief executive of the Zuellig Group).

Best investment area

These businessmen have operations in the country, while Fung and HSBC's Gulliver are members of the President's international board of advisers.

Aside from discussing the next phase of the President's economic reforms from privatizing the energy sector to cracking down on corruption to controlling the budget deficit, Bunye said the President also talked shop with the Hong Kong bigwigs, specifically on possible projects in mining, energy and tourism.

"I believe the Philippines is the best investment area in Asia, if not the world, and I am determined to convince international investors of this point," said the President, who is also set to make similar trips to Japan and Singapore.

The President also met with Hong Kong's local press and international media outfits, such as Bloomberg, Japan's Nikkei and Financial Times.

"These media sessions will help carry the message of the new investment environment in the Philippines to the financial and business communities worldwide," Bunye said.

The President met with her anticorruption adviser, Tony Kwok, Hong Kong's top graft cop, for a status report, as well as members of the Filipino community.

Around 30 Filipino demonstrators stood outside Ms Arroyo's hotel as she began her visit. They shouted slogans and held up small white signs that said, "Out with Graft! Out with Gloria!" *Reports from Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and AP*

Militants, Erap loyalists unite for anti-GMA rally

From page A1

Rep. Teodoro Casiño said, referring to Ms Arroyo, as he explained to reporters the militant party-list group's decision to strike an alliance with pro-Estrada forces.

"After four years, things have worsened," said San Juan Mayor Juan Victor Ejercito, one of Estrada's sons.

Cameras clicked and rolled as Ejercito stood behind Casiño during the news conference where they announced plans for what they said would be a massive protest against Ms Arroyo.

'Biggest sin'

"This is no longer about 'jueteng' … This is no longer about corruption. It's about the biggest sin, which is robbing the people of their rights," Ejercito added.

The authenticity of the tape has not been officially confirmed and it has not been established if it is really Ms Arroyo and former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano who are talking in the controversial tape.

Casiño was part of PlunderWatch, one of the private complainants in the impeachment trial of Estrada.

Other militants at the news conference were Anakpawis Rep. Crispin Beltran, Bayan secretary general Renato Reyes, Gabriela deputy secretary general Emmi de Jesus, Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas secretary general Danilo Ramos, and Courage leader Ferdinand Gaite.

Other Edsa II participants who showed up were civil society members who had long been estranged from Ms Arroyo, such as Linda Montayre, formerly of the Kongreso ng Mamamayang Pilipino, and Jose "Linggoy" Alcuaz, now allied with supporters of late opposition presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr.

Former Arroyo ally

Former Internal Revenue Commissioner Liwayway Vinzons-Chato, who was also at Edsa II, attended yesterday's gathering.

Chato is the lawyer of former National Bureau of Investigation Deputy Director Samuel Ong, who has said he holds the "mother of all tapes" of the President's alleged conversations with Garcillano.

Other Edsa III loyalists present included members of the People's Movement Against Poverty led by Ronald Lumbao, who has been charged with rebellion for his role in Edsa Tres but is out on bail.

"What we are against is the system," Montayre said.

Montayre, one of the leaders of the People's Coalition for National Salvation (PCNS), said members of the "patriotic military" and the Philippine National Police—both active and retired—were working for Ms Arroyo's ouster.

"Of course, we can't name those still in the active service," she said.

Montayre said the PCNS was made up of civilian and military organizations, and a group of retired officers and soldiers led by former Defense Secretary Fortunato Abat.

Bayan's Reyes said the corruption that rocked the Estrada administration was a separate issue from what his group was now fighting for.

"The Estrada forces expressed willingness to [be with us in the protest against Ms Arroyo]. They are just one of the groups taking up the issue," he said.

Abat group to lead march

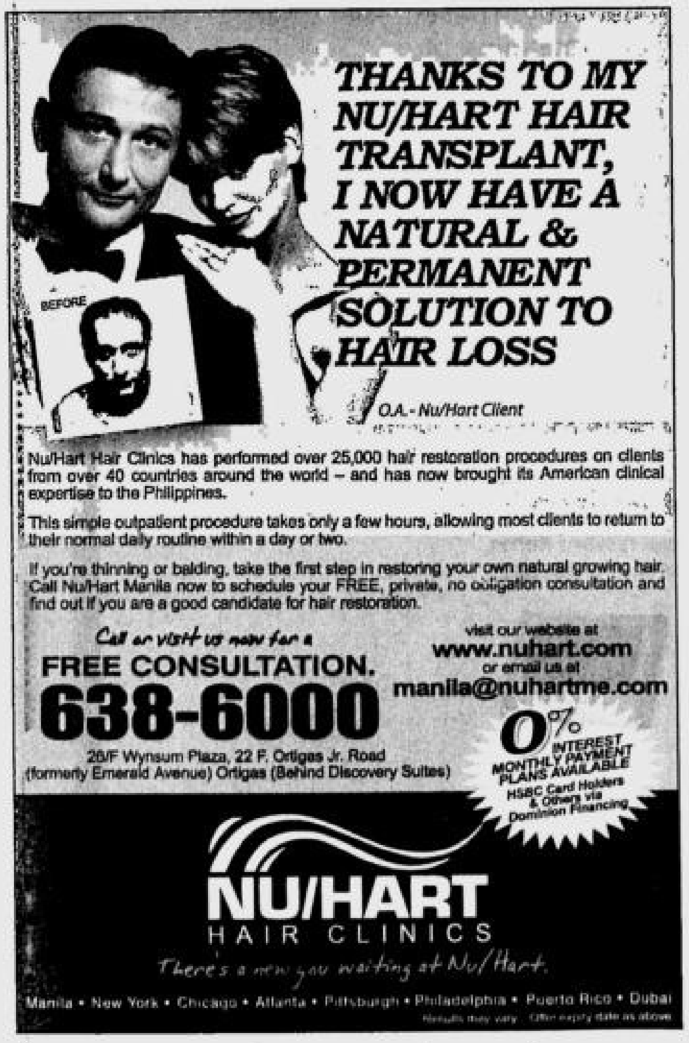
RETIRED Maj. Gen. Fortunato Abat, one of President Macapagal-Arroyo's most vocal critics, said he and his group would not allow the military to take advantage of the current political crisis.

Abat, a former Army chief and defense secretary who has been calling on Ms Arroyo to resign, announced his group would lead a march on Malacañang on June 25 to "preempt" any military junta or communist takeover.

The march by his group, called the Coalition for National Security, is scheduled a day after another protest rally at Liwasang Bonifacio planned by other sectors critical of Ms Arroyo.

"The People's March is intended to preempt a coup d'état to install a military junta or a violent overthrow of government to install a communist government," Abat said in a letter to Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Efren Abu.

Abat did not say how his group's march to the Palace would preempt a coup. But he stressed he would not tolerate any seditious remarks during the march. *Dona Z. Pazzibugan*



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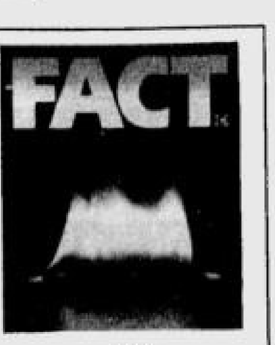

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RP losing ₱100B due to environment degradation – World Bank

By Christine Gaylican and Blanche S. Rivera

ENVIRONMENTAL degradation is costing the country some P100 billion annually, the World Bank said yesterday.

In its Philippine Environment Report 2004, the World Bank said the country was losing annually P67 billion due to water pollution, P23 billion for lack of management of fisheries resources and P21 billion in health bills because of air pollution.

"These are real economic losses that could be reduced over time through effective environmental management," World Bank-Philippines director Joachim von Amsberg said during the launch of the latest environment report at the Ninoy Aquino Parks and Wildlife in Quezon City.

The report, which assessed the progress made by the Philippines in environmental protection, noted that while there have been policy initiatives at the national and local level, these were not enough to effect substantial changes.

Jitendra Shah, lead environmentalist for World Bank-East Asia and principal author of the report, said he was surprised by the enormity of the Philippines' economic losses due to degradation.

"It will take less than a tenth or even a hundredth of that cost to protect the environment," Shah said.

He said it was important for the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to get a bigger budget to support its programs.

"In some areas, progress in environmental quality has been achieved. But actual change on the ground, measured by environmental indicators, has been slow and not yet sufficient to overcome years of neglect, haphazard policy-making, and weak local environmental management," the World Bank said.

Most of the country's watersheds are considered degraded, while 76 percent of the total forest land area face some extent of degradation, the World Bank said.

Around 5.2 million hectares are seriously eroded, reducing soil productivity by up to 50 percent. Another 8,446 hectares or 28 percent of the country's soil are moderately eroded.

While the Philippines' forest cover has increased from 5.4 million hectares in 1988 to 7.168 million hectares in 2002, the Philippines remains among the top 11 tropical countries with the lowest forest cover per capita.

Environment Secretary Michael Defensor said his department was aware of the problem.

"It only goes to show that we really need to change the policy direction. It's really a problem of enforcement," said Defensor, who was present at the launch.

The World Bank also awarded seven environmental champions yesterday, including Puerto Princesa City, the only local government cited for having fully replanted its watershed, apprehending smokers in public places and crafting proenvironment policies that encouraged other local executives to follow suit.

"Poor water quality has large economic and quality-of-life costs in terms of health impacts, potable water costs, foregone tourism revenues and lost fisheries production," Shah pointed out. He said lack of political will among implementing agencies had led to further pollution of water resources nationwide.

5 NPAs killed in Samar

FIVE communist guerrillas were killed in a clash with government forces on the island of Samar last week, the military yesterday said.

The fighting was between an Army patrol and a unit of the New People's Army at a village near the town of Jiadong on Wednesday, Army spokesperson Maj. Bartolome Bacarro said.

The soldiers recovered the bodies of the five rebels, including that of a woman. *AFP*

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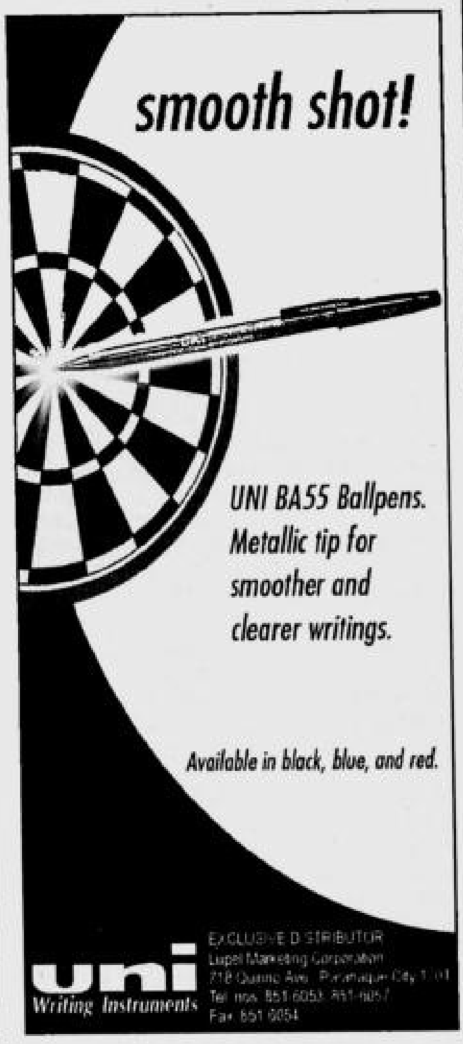
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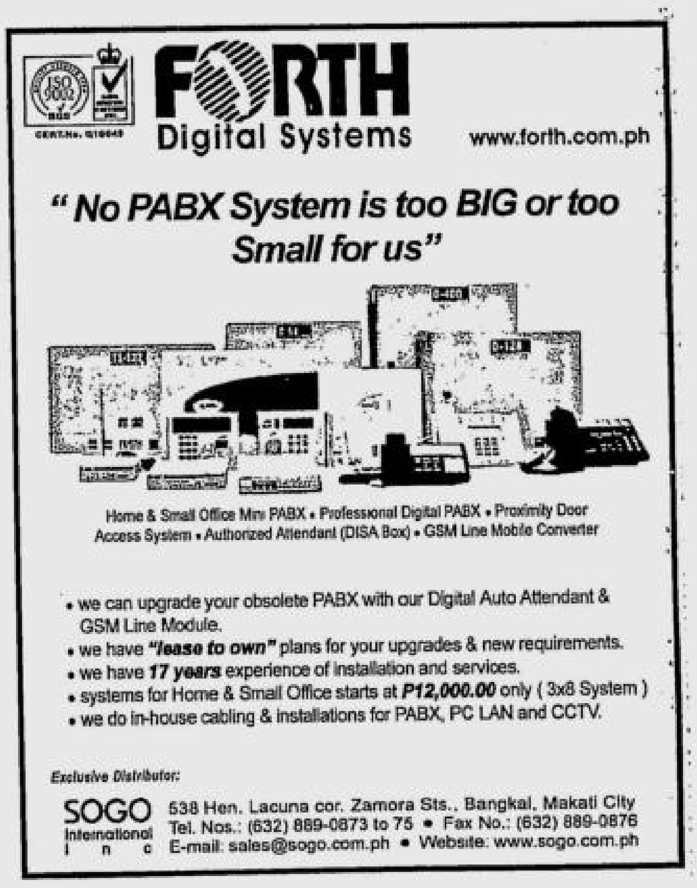
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Charles Darwin UNIVERSITY Australia
Filipina realizes dream education in Australia
Amber Favis has high hopes for her future. So much so that she left her home country, the Philippines, to study Engineering at Charles Darwin University in Darwin, Australia.
Amber, 25, gained a Bachelor of Civil Engineering at the University of the Philippines in Manila in 2002. She then spent 4 months working for the engineering construction company, VibroMetrics.
However, wanting to go further in her career, Amber began assessing her options. "Ultimately, I want to get into an engineering management role in the construction industry" she said.
"I was working for IDP when I found out about the Engineering courses at Charles Darwin University in Darwin, Australia."
"The courses sounded perfect."
Amber applied and was accepted for a scholarship position in the Masters of Engineering Management course at Charles Darwin University and began her studies in March this year.
"When I first arrived in Australia I knew no one," she said.
"I had no family and friends and I was unbelievably homesick, but everyone was so friendly and nice that after only a couple of days I felt completely settled in."
Amber lives on campus in North Flinders International House, where she has access to facilities such as computers,professional mentoring and support and lives with students from all over the world.
"There is such a mix of people living at North Flinders," she said.
"I now have friends from all over the world not only from Australia. So many international students come to study here, it's such a great experience."
Amber also has high praise for her lecturers and rates the support she has been given in her classes highly: "The support I have been given is fantastic."
"There is a lot of student-teacher interaction and support in Australia and everyone is enthusiastic and friendly.
"Students here aren't afraid to speak up, whereas in the Philippines the relationship between the student and teacher is more traditional. In Australia I can actually talk to my lecturer as an equal."
"Classes are more practical in Australia, compared to back home which is theory based. Here, you get to apply what you have learnt."
Head of the School of Engineering Dr Friso De Boer said that "Engineering at the Charles Darwin University is entering into an exciting phase of growth. Many large scale engineering projects are currently under way in the Northern Territory of Australia, underpinning the strong demand for engineering graduates from Charles Darwin University. We would like our international engineering students to become part of this exciting development."
There are many pathways and options into study at Charles Darwin University for prospective international students.
Director of International Office, Mr Dennis Meehan said: "Charles Darwin University is an excellent study destination for students from the Philippines. The University offers quality programs with excellent student facilities. There is a supportive local community that welcomes students and the tropical weather is an added bonus."
Amber will be available at the IDP office in Makati City on June 24 and 25 If you are interested in finding out more information about studying at Charles Darwin University. For a confidential interview and assessment with Amber please call Ely Cuaton at (02) 816-0755 local 110, 102 or 109 or email info@manila.idp.com
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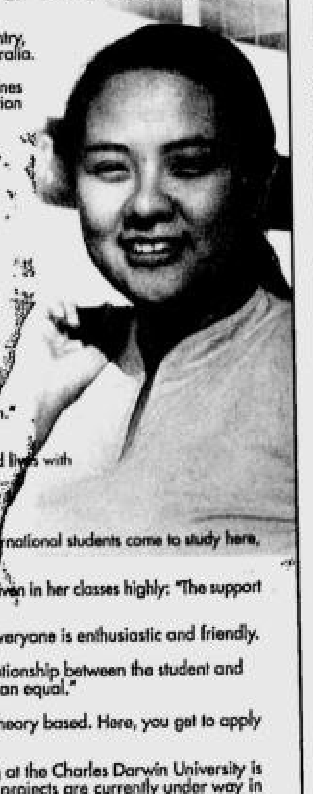

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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Rebel attacks in Iraq kill 85 in 2 days

IRBIL, Iraq—A suicide car bomber killed 20 traffic policemen and wounded 100 more Monday outside the unit's headquarters in the northern Kurdish city of Irbil, police and hospital officials said.

A KURDISH policeman weeps near the clothes of his colleagues who were killed or wounded in a suicide attack in the Kurdish city of Arbil in northern Iraq. Twenty traffic policemen were killed and 100 wounded when a suicide car bomber blew himself up in a crowded sports ground. AFP

Iraq's insurgency appeared unfazed by two massive US-Iraqi military offensives against militant smuggling routes and training centers west and north of Baghdad, mounting attacks that have killed at least 85 in the past two days—including 30 people on Monday.

The bomber in Irbil wore a police uniform and slammed his car into a gathering of some 200 traffic policemen during morning roll call in a courtyard behind the headquarters at 8 a.m., police Lt. Sulaiman Mohammed said.

At least 20 died and 100 were wounded, said Dr. Mohammed Ali of Irbil Hospital.

The attack occurred on a main street that leads to the oil-rich northern Iraqi city of Kirkuk, which is south of Irbil, police said.

Irbil, one of two major cities in Iraq's northern Kurdish region, has enjoyed autonomous rule under Western protection since 1991. The area has been largely sheltered from the incessant violence wracking the remainder of Iraq, but has seen several major bombings blamed on militant Muslim groups.

The attack came a day after a suicide bomber walked into a crowded Baghdad kebab restaurant near the heavily fortified main gate of US and Iraqi government headquarters at the Green Zone, killing at least 23 people including policemen—the deadliest attack in the capital in just over six weeks. A total of 45 people were killed in insurgent assaults throughout the country on Sunday.

Most of the suicide attackers are thought to belong to extremist groups such as al-Qaida in Iraq, which has justified killing other Muslims, including women and children, in their quest to destabilize the Shiite-led government of Prime Minister Ibrahim al-Jaafari.

The rate of insurgent attacks has risen dramatically since al-Jaafari announced his Cabinet on April 28. At least 1,182 people have been killed since then.

Some extremists have also started threatening fellow Sunni Arabs, who make up the insurgency's core, because some leaders of the minority Muslim sect have expressed a readiness to join the political process. Most Sunnis boycotted January's historic election.

On Monday, Sunni Arabs were expected to name their representatives to a committee that has until mid-August to draft Iraq's new constitution. The number of Sunni members took weeks to negotiate with the Shiite majority.

Elsewhere, a band of insurgents launched a bold assault on a Baghdad police station killing at least eight policemen and an 8-month-old baby early Monday, police said. At least 23 were wounded.

The attack on the Baya police station in southwestern Baghdad began just before dawn and included two car suicide bombs, mortars, rocket-propelled grenades and small arms fire, police Capt. Talib Thamir said.

Separately, a roadside bomb Monday killed a US soldier on patrol near Tal Afar, 150 kilometers east of the Syrian border, the military said. The soldier belonged to the 1st Corps Support Command and was not part of the two major US-Iraqi offensives taking part in the western Anbar province. *AP*

SETRIDA Geagea, the wife of Lebanese Forces' jailed leader Samir Geagea, casts her ballot in the mountain town of Becharre, northern Lebanon, June 19, in the fourth and last stage of Lebanon's parliamentary elections. AP

Anti-Syrian alliance wins polls, promises change for Lebanon

BEIRUT—A Lebanese anti-Syrian alliance promised sweeping change on Monday after winning control of parliament in the first elections in three decades without Syrian troops in Lebanon.

An unofficial count for north Lebanon on Sunday night showed an alliance led by Saad al-Hariri sweeping all remaining 28 seats, while its rivals conceded they were heading for defeat.

The ballot, staggered by region over four weekends, is the first in three decades with no Syrian military presence after Damascus pulled its troops out in April.

"Final results show that we are ahead and show that the people have voted for change," said Hariri, the son of slain ex-Premier Rafik al-Hariri who is backing the opposition slate.

"It was not possible that after the martyrdom of Rafik al-Hariri, the withdrawal of Syria, that nothing would change."

The victory means the 128-seat assembly has an anti-Syrian majority for the first time since the 1975-1990 civil war.

Pro-Syrian Christian former Minister Suleiman Franjieh conceded he and his candidates headed for defeat in the mainly Sunni Muslim north, though they did well in Christian areas.

"What we feared is happening. I think the north has been divided along sectarian lines," Franjieh told LBC television station. "We have arrived at what we used to warn against."

Beirut newspapers, pointing to a new era after the elections, warned of a sharp rise in sectarianism.

"Voting along sectarian lines opens the door for a delicate period in which no one knows how to overcome the sectarian tension that characterized the elections across Lebanon," as-Safir daily said.

The anti-Syrian list squared off against an unlikely alliance of pro-Syrians and Damascus' erstwhile foe, former Gen. Michel Aoun, a Maronite Christian.

Aoun's victory in the Christian heartland of Mount Lebanon in last week's round stunned the movement whose street protests following Hariri's assassination on Feb. 14 forced Syria to bow to global pressure and pull out of Lebanon.

Hariri's bloc has now won 72 seats, an absolute majority, but short of the two-thirds the anti-Syrian front had predicted.

Aoun and allies have 21 seats while a pro-Syrian Shiite Muslim alliance between Hizbollah and Amal have 35 seats. *Reuters*

Whalers suffer setback at IWC meet

ULSAN, South Korea—Pro-whaling countries failed to muster a majority Monday at the annual whaling commission meeting, in a setback for their hopes to control its agenda and eventually overturn a nearly two-decade ban on commercial whale hunts.

A Japanese proposal to delete discussion of whale sanctuaries from the five-day meeting's agenda was voted down 29-28 in what was seen as a test of whether whaling advocates have built a majority among the 66 members of the International Whaling Commission.

A majority would give pro-whaling countries broad authority to set the commission's agenda. However, it would still fall far short of the three-fourth's vote required to overturn the moratorium on commercial whaling.

The Cambridge, England-based commission that regulates whaling banned commercial hunts in 1986, handing environmentalists a major victory in protecting species that were near extinction after centuries of whaling.

Norway holds the world's only commercial whaling season in defiance of the ban. Japan kills whales for what it describes as scientific research, but sells the meat. Japan, Norway and other nations this year are expected to take more than 1,550 whales.

New Zealand, Australia and conservationist groups such as Greenpeace oppose any expansion of whaling.

Japan is against new whale sanctuaries and proposed that this issue—and others opposed by pro-whaling countries—be pushed off the agenda at the opening of the commission's annual general assembly in South Korea.

The commission voted 29-28 to end debate on the Japanese motion, prompting IWC Commissioner Henrik Fischer of Denmark to rule that the agenda was to be adopted as is.

"That was a defeat for Japan," said New Zealand Conservation Minister Chris Carter.

Joji Morishita, Japan's chief negotiator on whaling issues, said there were remaining questions about whether the agenda was properly adopted, adding that his country was putting up a "good fight."

A simple majority of pro-whaling nations would be able to pass resolutions favoring their stance, including ones that express support for Japan's research program or voice backing for the resumption of limited kills. *AP*

22 Afghans killed in attacks linked to Taliban fighters

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan—Twenty-two Afghans were killed and three US soldiers injured in the latest attacks linked to the war-battered country's former Taliban regime, officials said Monday.

Militants from the fundamentalist Islamic group, ousted by US-led forces in late 2001, attacked a district in Helmand province, 560 km south of Kabul, early Monday, a provincial government spokesperson said.

"Taliban attacked Washer district at 2:30 a.m. and killed the district governor Mullah Sakhi and one policeman," Mohammed Wali told AFP.

"Eleven Taliban were killed in the exchange of fire and their bodies are still lying in the area. Three Taliban were wounded," he said.

Late on Sunday at least one policeman was killed and two were wounded when a checkpoint on the highway between Kabul and the main southern city of Kandahar was attacked in southern Zabul province.

Zabul police director Abdul Jabar Uruzgani said Taliban fighters had carried out the attack.

Uruzgani said seven Taliban fighters were also killed but their bodies were not left at the scene. The Taliban often take the bodies of fallen comrades with them.

A highway policeman was killed in an attack on the Kandahar-Herat road in the western province of Farah early Sunday and four others were wounded, three critically, said Herat police spokesperson Abdul Raof Ahmadi.

He added that the attack was "organized by the Taliban and al-Qaida to disturb peace and security in the country."

The three US troops were slightly wounded on Sunday when their vehicle hit an improvised bomb during a patrol in the troubled province of Paktika, near the Pakistani border. Four US soldiers have been killed in the area this month.

Two of the wounded soldiers returned to duty and one was kept in hospital for observation, said US military spokesperson Col. James Yonts. *AFP*

Strong quakes rattle Japan

TOKYO—A series of strong quakes jolted mainland Japan, including Tokyo, on Monday but there were no immediate reports of casualties or damage, officials said.

The biggest quake registered 5.6 on the Richter scale and struck Chiba prefecture east of Tokyo early Monday morning, causing buildings to sway in the capital.

It occurred 50 kilometers underground at 1:15 a.m., the Japan Meteorological Agency said.

A quake measuring 5.0 on the Richter scale hit at 1:03 p.m. in central Niigata prefecture, which last year saw the earthquake-prone nation's deadliest tremor in a decade.

"We have received no reports of damage so far but are still checking expressways," a police official said.

It took place about 220 kilometers northwest of Tokyo and 10 kilometers underground, the meteorological agency said. There were no risks of tsunami waves.

Ten minutes later, a tremor registering 4.1 hit Niigata.

The province was struck in October by an earthquake reading 6.8 on the Richter scale followed by hundreds of aftershocks. Forty-six people were killed, many of them by fatigue and stress about living in shelters.

It was the deadliest quake since 1995 when 6,433 people were killed in the western port city of Kobe.

An hour after the first tremor struck Niigata on Monday, a quake of 4.5 took place in Gifu prefecture, some 300 kilometers west of Tokyo.

"We are collecting information from police stations but have received no reports of major damage," said a Gifu prefectural police spokesperson.

Japan endures 20 percent of the world's powerful earthquakes as the country lies at the meeting of four tectonic plates. *AFP*

HOW ABOUT TRYING THIS ON ELEPHANTS

A Spanish "recortador" leaps over a bull during a bull festival in the southern Spanish town of Algeciras June 19. The "recortadores" bullfight is an ancient tradition where the men try to dodge bulls without cape or sword. The bulls are not killed. REUTERS

Program predicts Alzheimer's years before symptoms

WASHINGTON—Scientists may soon be able to scan for Alzheimer's disease years before the onset of symptoms using a computer program that measures metabolic activity in the brain, researchers revealed here.

"This is the first demonstration that reduced metabolic activity in the hippocampus may be used to predict future Alzheimer's disease," said Lisa Mosconi of New York University's School of Medicine, who led the research and developed the technology.

"Although our findings need to be replicated in other studies, our technique offers the possibility that we will be able to screen for Alzheimer's in individuals who aren't cognitively impaired," she said. "It's accurate in 85 percent of the cases."

Mosconi presented her work Sunday before the first-ever International Conference on Prevention of Dementia, which runs through Tuesday.

The new technique builds on years of research by psychiatrist Mony de Leon, director of the Center for Brain Health, who demonstrated, using tomography and magnetic resonance imaging, that the size of the hippocampus, the region of the brain associated with memory and learning, shrinks as Alzheimer's progresses.

Mosconi studied 53 healthy people aged 54 to 80 over periods of nine to 24 years, using scans to measure the volume of glucose used by their brains.

Thanks to the technique, "right now, we can show with great accuracy who will develop Alzheimer's nine years in advance of symptoms, and our projections suggest we might be able to take that out as far as 15 years," explained De Leon, whose related research was financed by the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

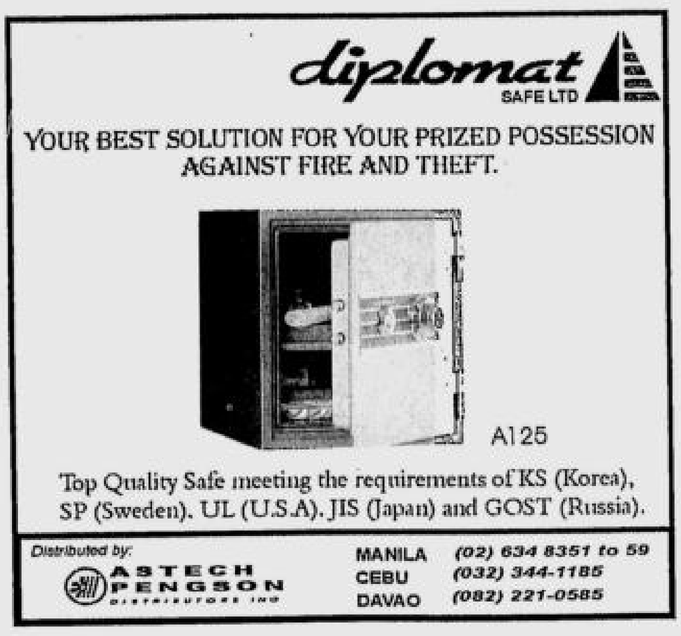
"Our basic results will need to be replicated in other studies and expanded to include PET scans data from diverse patients groups, but we're confident this is a strong beginning, demonstrating accurate detection of early Alzheimer's disease," he said.

"Now we have a better tool to examine disease progression, and we anticipate this might open some doors to prevention treatment strategies."

Another study presented Sunday, of 1,800 elderly Americans of Japanese ancestry, showed that those who drank fruit or vegetable juice at least three times a week were four times less likely to develop Alzheimer's.

Alzheimer's disease degrades the central nervous system, revealing its presence first by memory loss then slowly evolving to senile dementia. It is incurable and its cause remains unknown.

The disease affects an estimated 10 million people worldwide, usually after the age of 65. Some 4.5 million Americans have Alzheimer's, a number expected to triple by 2050 as the population ages. *AFP*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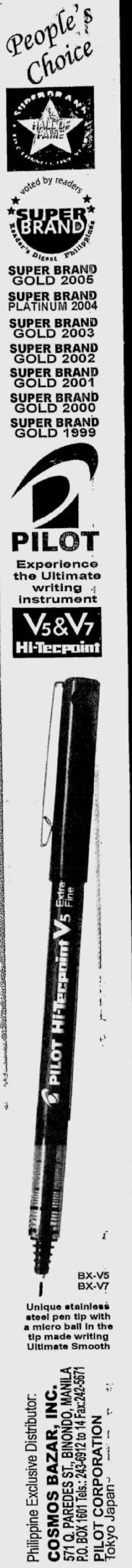
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Pressure on Burma

EDITORIAL

IT WAS only fitting that former President Corazon Aquino should lead Filipino activists in offering prayers for the unconditional release of Aung San Suu Kyi, the world's only Nobel Prize winner who is being held prisoner, on her 60th birthday last Sunday. Ms Aquino's husband, former Sen. Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino, spent eight years in detention before he was allowed to go to the United States to be treated for a heart ailment.

The date was also fitting. Sunday, Suu Kyi's birthday, was also the 144th anniversary of the birth of Jose Rizal whose martyrdom sparked the Revolution that freed the Philippines from Spanish rule. Like our national hero, Suu Kyi is a modern-day heroine for democracy and freedom. It's high time Burma's ruling junta released Suu Kyi who has spent the last 14 years in confinement.

Ms Aquino and the activists pledged to help in Suu Kyi's crusade to bring democracy to Burma. Akbayan Rep. Loreta Ann Rosales, a political detainee during Ferdinand Marcos' dictatorship, said she would continue to work with other Southeast Asian legislators to press Burma's military junta to return to democracy. Rosales has filed a resolution asking the House of Representatives to oppose Burma's chairmanship of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations unless it frees Suu Kyi and other dissidents and fulfills its promise to democratize.

There may be a response from Burma when the Asean holds its ministerial meeting from July 24 to 29 in Vientiane, Laos. But right now the prospects of the military junta releasing Suu Kyi and democratizing Burma are not too encouraging.

In the past three months, the junta has taken a firm stand against the release of Suu Kyi. It has resisted calls for Burma to give up the chairmanship of Asean in 2006 under an alphabetically rotating system. Laos, now the chair of Asean, will be succeeded in July by Malaysia. The scheduled next chair is Burma (Myanmar) in 2006.

During the past three months, various nations and international entities have been urging Burma to democratize and to make a start by releasing Suu Kyi, to no avail. In April, legislators from five countries urged the Inter-Parliamentary Union that was meeting in Manila to put the Burma issue on the agenda, but failed in their efforts.

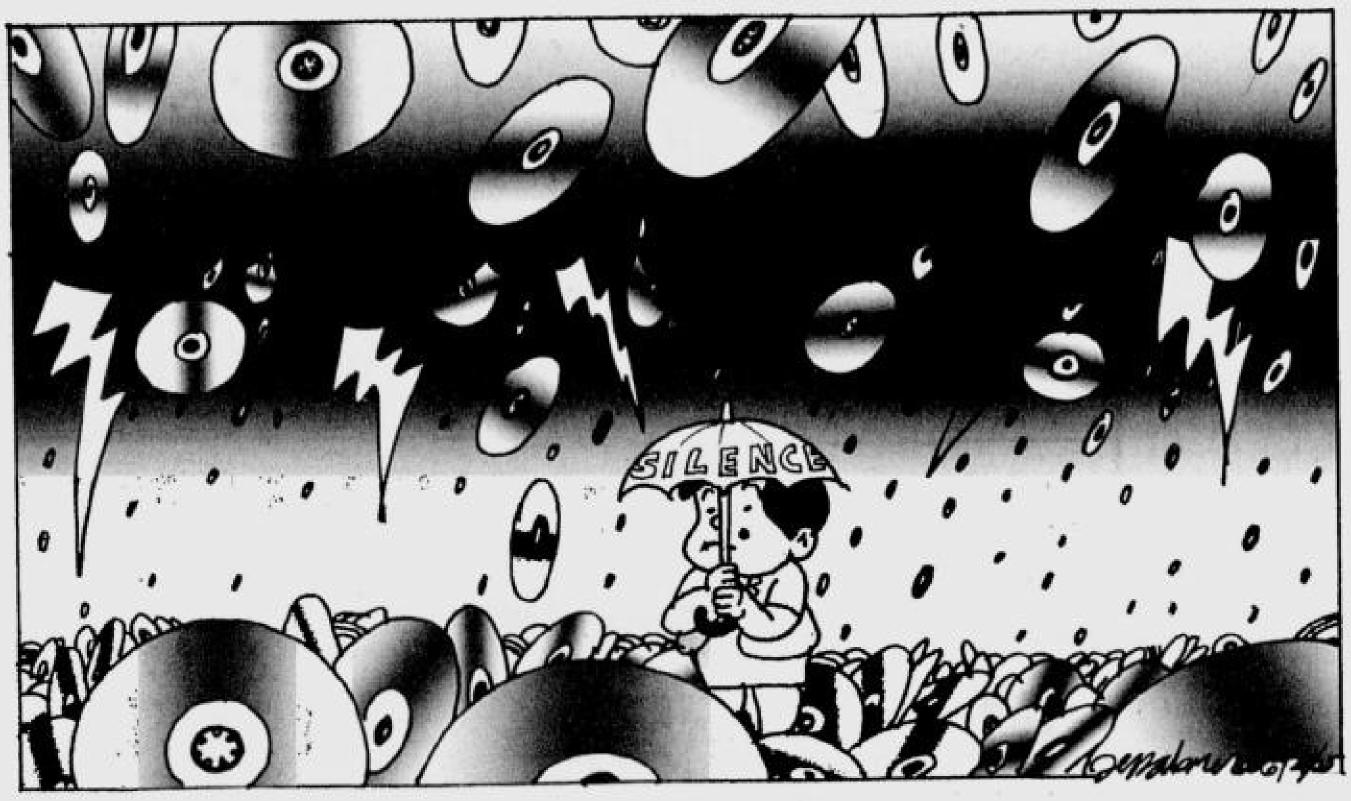
Asean drew out Burma from isolation in 1997, taking the more conciliatory approach of "constructive engagement" with the reclusive generals of the ruling junta. Asean legislators have said that the approach has not produced any result. Those wanting Burma to change will have to exert stronger diplomatic and public relations pressure.

The freedom-loving nations and organizations of the world continue to put pressure on Burma to release Suu Kyi and take definite steps to democratize. Among the latest to join the clamor for democratization and Suu Kyi's release were a group of 14 Nobel laureates, the Norwegian Nobel Committee and Bishop Desmond Tutu who helped galvanize global opinion against apartheid in South Africa.

Burma's critics say its poor human rights record and reluctance to reform tarnishes the reputation of Asean, and so it should not be allowed to become the chair of the 10-member regional grouping. If Burma takes over the chairmanship of Asean in 2006 without democratizing first, Asean could become alienated from its Western allies. If Burma takes over, it would host in 2007 a major security forum that is usually attended by Asean's dialogue partners: the European Union, the United States, Australia, New Zealand, India, Japan, Korea, China and Russia.

The European Union and the United States, which have imposed economic sanctions on Burma, have warned that they would boycott Asean meetings if a country with a questionable human rights record would preside over them. It would be a pity if two of the world's leading economic and political powers would disengage from a dialogue with Asean.

It is fitting that former President Aquino, who presided over the transition of the Philippines from dictatorship back to democracy, should remind the nation and the world of the plight of Suu Kyi and Burma. The Philippines, as one of the vibrant democracies in Asia, has to lead the effort in the region to maintain pressure on Burma to democratize. And it could begin by continuing to call on Burma to give up the chairmanship of the Asean unless it shows a clear indication that it is following the road map to democratization.



Vive les concubines

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

OURS is a land of mirrors where wonders never cease. Take detained Joseph Estrada's unsolicited offer: he'll skip his plunder trial and unlock detention shackles to serve, for a year, as chair of a junta. All members would be of "unquestioned integrity." Just like the chair, right?

Erap's nine-member cabal would clone the old Greek and newer Burmese juntas. Of course, the Arroyo regime has still to be toppled. People power shows no sign of erupting. But what's a revolution between friends.

The church, military and middle class, Estrada assumes, will back the overthrow. That would include scrapping the Constitution, refrigerating his plunder trial, embracing him as "liberator," etc. Can his 29-page (single-spaced) program command recognition by other nations?

Attila the Hun also had a program. In 440 A.D., he ravaged Central Europe. "He was probably the first entrepreneur whose customers paid to stop providing his service," J.P. Morgan executive Chris Lowney writes in "Heroic Leadership."

So, will heroic opposition members advise their chair emeritus to stop offering services like Attila. Nobody will man People Power 4 barricades for Jose Velarde, "Jingle Bells" and other sleazy characters around him.

"There's been a deliberate ploy to resurrect 'the spirit of Edsa'" by crude clones of People Power 1 and 2, columnist Antonio Abaya writes. These attempts to uncork the bottled genie of people power proved to be "pathetic flops."

"Behind this reluctance to take to the streets is the perception that events are being stage-managed," notes Melba Padilla Maggay of the Institute for Studies in Asian Church and Culture. "Instead of moral outrage stirrings, one feels a certain fatigue, tinged with rage, at being blatantly manipulated."

There's also disillusionment. They've seen Edsa promises hijacked by the political elite "as a way to return to power and corner the system's spoils," this social anthropologist notes in a Patmos Features analysis.

Who are these faceless "stage managers"? Did they assume people have short memories? Many still wince recalling how Estrada's regime collapsed from "5-K governance: *kamaganak, kaklase, kumpadre, kaibigan—at kabit?*"

In his book "The Erap Tragedy," cashiered Malacañang chief of staff Aprodicio Laquian documented how boozing, gambling and flaunting of concubines sapped any pretence of government.

Regime collapse was also "the story of Mr. Estrada's disdain for the day-to-day tasks of running a government; his refusal to hold regular Cabinet meetings; unwillingness to read government reports," the International Herald Tribune asserted.

Advisers warned Erap in April 1999 of possible impeachment through a "capable and politically astute" mistress, IHT's Thomas Fuller reported. She was not identified. "Was she presidential *kabit* number 3?" asked Sun Star. "Or concubine 05? Is power, for now, with the concubines?"

Now, a mistress denies bankrolling production of a "mother of all tapes" that has left President Arroyo twisting in the wind. Nor did she fund the failed Magdalo mutiny.

Will "vive les concubines" harden resistance against Erap's fiddling with extra-constitutional bids?

"Marcos tested the limits of political oppression and our capacity to endure it," Maggay wrote in 2000. "Estrada is testing the limits of moral corruption and our capacity to get roused to indignation."

"[Today] the greatest disservice of the Arroyo administration, to the nation and itself, is its lack of a moral center," she adds. "A presidency that has lost its (spiritual) moorings sends the entire state adrift in a morass where ethical boundaries are always shifting."

Hindus, Christians, Muslims, Jews or Buddhists believe "private sins, indiscretions and immorality of leaders have tragic national results," Evelyn Miranda Feliciano of the Institute for Studies in Asian Church and Culture pointed out earlier.

"Our Asian traditions saw the folly of dichotomizing private and public conduct," she adds. The Koran, Bible, Hindu Vedas and Confucius' Analects insist that character and competence must be embedded in leadership—"sageliness within and kingliness without."

"Compartmentalizing private lives of leaders from their public functions is a subterfuge," Feliciano says. This fractures Asian religious beliefs and "is conveniently put up by those who do not wish to be accountable."

Consequences include economic fallout from moral rot at the center of governance. "The Philippines is one of those strange countries with unexplained poverty." It has resources, trained manpower, technological savvy, etc.. Yet, it's skidding into basket-case status, like some African countries.

Men on white chargers—or "top-down, immediate all-transforming leadership—is not the solution," says the "Heroic Leadership" study. "It is the problem." Such searches only divert citizens from their essential task of working at reform in their daily sphere of activities.

"We should begin using (people power) more effectively to do something about the very causes we dump presidents for," suggests the anthropologist-priest of Bontoc, Francisco Claver, SJ. "Their crimes, their corruptions, their incompetencies are unfortunately embedded in our political culture, all the way down to barangays. That's the only way we can avoid having an infinite series of Edsas."

(E-mail: juan_mercado@pacific.net.ph)

Will she or won't she?

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

I GOT the text from several people over the weekend: GMA was going to declare martial law today. Hit squads armed with Bushmaster automatic rifles will fan out across the country, the media will be padlocked and cell-phone use will be monitored and regulated. Opposition figures will be rounded up, including Susan Roces.

That's all very nice except for one thing: I've heard the rumor before. In fact, before this, only the other weekend. The rumor said GMA would mount a Palace coup last week. It didn't happen.

Still, the question remains: Will she do it, if not today then tomorrow, literally or figuratively? Can she do it, if not the Marcos way, at least her way, resolutely or miserably?

Well, as personality goes, I wouldn't put it past her. GMA has no equal except Marcos in scale of ambition and lack of restraint. No one has craved power more. Her two terms, the first gratuitous by an act of people power and the second controversial by an act of "Hello Garci," have been dedicated to finding ways to cling to power. And no one has bent the rules more to keep power. She has thought nothing of resurrecting military rule in the name of fighting terrorism (particularly in the first few months after 9/11), lying to the public about not running again and conspiring with a Comelec official to thwart the voters' will. She will think nothing of declaring martial law—if she can.

But that's the question: Can she?

Well, when Marcos declared martial law, he had complete control of the military. The generals were not only absolutely loyal to him, they were in absolute awe of him. He was always two or three steps ahead of you, Romeo Espino gushed. You don't go against someone who is always two or three steps ahead of you. And none of the generals did, except Rafael Ileto. When Marcos declared martial law, he had all the generals with him—the so-called "Rolex 12," named so for the watch he gifted them with afterward. They were the heads of all the services.

If GMA controls the military, only she knows about it. The generals are not only absolutely disloyal to her, they absolutely scorn her. And what applies to the generals applies even more to the junior officers and rank-and-file. Marcos never saw an act of defiance against him until much later. GMA has already been the object of a mutiny. Quite apart from that, the military under Marcos never harbored a "praetorian mentality," one that made the officers think they were destined to serve as guardian of the republic, also until much later. Today, it does harbor it, not least because of GMA herself who fostered it in them with her "war against terror." She gave them back the political role they lost after 1986.

Even if GMA succeeds in putting the country under martial law, how long will she last?

When Marcos declared martial law, he had the Americans solidly behind him. America then was ruled by the thugs Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger, a rule that ushered in open American support for tyrants across the world. They were among the first to recognize the martial-law government and offer aid to it. Marcos might be an SOB, they said, but he was their SOB.

Today the US is ruled by the thugs George W. Bush and Donald Rumsfeld, a rule that has brought back American support for SOBs across the world. There is no great obstacle—certainly not domestic pressure—for them to support another Filipino tyrant eager to carry out their agenda. But there's the rub, they are not entirely sure GMA is their SOB. While she has been exceptionally zealous in war-mongering for them, she has also buckled down under the first sign of carrot and stick, threat and blandishment. She pulled out Philippine troops from Iraq when an extremist group threatened to behead a Filipino national, and she ran to China's embrace security-wise when offered all sorts of economic goodies.

Joseph Mussomeli, of course, says his government continues to support GMA, but Condoleeza Rice hates her guts, or lack of it. Beyond personal preferences, the US will probably not allow its agenda to be jeopardized by being carried out with bayonets by a detested leader, or worse by one whose voice, if not face, has launched a thousand text jokes. Though Reagan personally liked Marcos, he was forced to drop him in the end because his Security Council argued convincingly that he had become the No. 1 recruiter of the NPA. No president has fallen lower in the Filipinos' esteem than GMA, according to the surveys—which GMA has never denied but only made excuses for. Those surveys were made before the Tale of the Tapes.

Before Marcos declared martial law, Ninoy Aquino and the opposition confidently predicted that if he did so, the people would rise to topple him forthwith. They were astonished when the people did not. As it turned out, the people had gotten tired of the sound and fury and longed for some peace, even if it came in the form of authoritarian rule, which was then an unknown quantity. It was only later the people would realize martial law was a cure far worse than the disease.

Today, the people are tired of taking to the streets again to topple a tyrant. But they are seething inside, and looking for a way out of the predicament of having a usurper for queen. Will they accept martial law as submissively as their fathers and mothers did in 1972? Well, martial law is no longer an unknown quantity. The people have seen the beast up close and bestial. They know that the only thing worse than a tyrant ruling tyrannically under the pretense of a democracy is a tyrant ruling tyrannically without any pretense at all.

I could be wrong, of course. Stranger things have happened in this country. Who knows? Maybe you won't be reading this column after all.

'Simply political noise'

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

EVIDENTLY the political turmoil kicked up by the tape and *jueteng* scandals has failed so far to convince foreign investors that the government of President Macapagal-Arroyo is about to fall. From all indications, foreign analysts, to whom foreign investors listen in making financial judgments, have ruled that GMA's foes are just "a noisy minority." They also regard the problems besetting her as "temporary" and "ridiculous" and are confident that GMA would overcome them. The analysts instead prefer to look at the economic reforms put in place through the partnership between the executive and legislative branches, which are now bearing fruit in terms of bigger revenues that are cutting the budget deficit. But more importantly, they seem able to distinguish between the "fundamental changes" taking place and those that are simply "political noise."

* * *

The above comes from the June 14 paper of ATR-Kim Eng Securities, a foreign equity research group. Questioning why the allegations of electoral fraud in the tapes are being exposed only now, over a year after the elections, the firm noted that unless the accusations against GMA and her family are corroborated by other evidence, "the likelihood is that there won't be any changes in government." ATR-Kim Eng Securities also termed as "farcical" the attempts "to try to precipitate an impeachment along the lines of what happened to former President Joseph Estrada."

* * *

Earlier this column noted the observation made last week by Standard Chartered Bank's regional economic analyst Mike Moran that the economy, which seems headed for a 5-percent growth this year, looks "quite healthy." He stressed that credit rating agencies have looked favorably on recent fiscal developments, such as the passage of crucial economic reforms in Congress and the increased revenue collections, all of which could presage better ratings by year end. Moran said RP is generating more interest now among investors due to its economic reform program, but added that they are also carefully watching political developments before making any decision.

From the above, it's evident that political turmoil would only set back our economic recovery; hence it behooves all of us, especially our political leaders, to resolve the political conflicts at the earliest possible time.

* * *

Speaker Jose de Venecia called up over the weekend from London where he flew from Paris after meeting with several crucial groups that could have a direct bearing on RP's fiscal health. JDV said he met with the president of the Paris Club of creditor countries and made an appeal on behalf of the Arroyo administration about converting some of our foreign debts into equity in infrastructure projects in the Philippines. JDV was encouraged by the recent condonation by the Group of 8 richest nations of the foreign debts of the poorest countries, the majority of which are in Africa, upon the initiative of Prime Ministers Tony Blair and Junichiro Koizumi. JDV said he proposed a debt conversion program for the second generation of debtor nations which are in Asia, including RP, whereby 50 percent of their foreign debts are to be converted into equity in local infrastructure projects. The proposal, which is in line with the UN Millenium Development Goals, could very well affect the lives of about 600 million people in Southeast Asia if adopted.

* * *

JDV was greatly encouraged when the president of the Paris Club right then and there decided to create a working technical committee to study his debt-conversion idea. He recounted that he also met with various mining firms, including the conference of 100 Mining Companies in London, which expressed great interest in putting together a $6-billion fund to develop RP's mining industry.

From Paris, JDV proceeded to London where he had dinner with two senior officials of the Treasury, Bart Bouman and Joe Thornton, who are involved in programs along the idea he has proposed. He said these two officials indicated their willingness to join the technical working committee organized by the Paris Club president.

* * *

Predictably, JDV also found himself peppered with queries by creditors as well as prospective investors about the political situation in RP. Specifically they wanted to know if President Arroyo would survive the political attacks against her administration. JDV said that he asserted before the various groups he addressed, including the members of the French parliament, that a coup d'état against GMA won't succeed. This is because, he said, the crucial elements of society, such as the church, the El Shaddai, the various business chambers and NGO leaders, "all the elements that helped bring down Marcos 20 years ago at Edsa," are with GMA. JDV also said he stressed to the foreign groups that the issue of electoral fraud had been disproved by the various foreign election observers themselves who were present during the May 2004 elections. He also pointed out that the opposition had all the chances to present their evidence of fraud during the long canvassing process in Congress after the elections. JDV also noted that the political risk organizations have assigned a very low risk factor for RP.

* * *

One can see how beneficial it would be to our country if even just a portion of our huge external debt could be converted into equity in our infrastructure projects, as the Speaker has proposed. Treasury officials have said that we would need some P600 billion by next year to meet our foreign obligations. *Saan tayo kukuha nito?*

But it's also easy to see that we need a modicum of political stability for people abroad to take our appeal for debt condonation seriously. *Tumigil na sana ang* destabilization.

Silence is not the answer

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

WHAT does it say about us and our capacity for outrage that the strongest and most organized response to the "Gloriagate" crisis has been the downloading of the "Hello Garci" ringtone?

A story in yesterday's INQUIRER says demand for the ringtone—a soundbite snipped from the tapes of allegedly bugged conversations between a woman who sounds uncannily like President Macapagal-Arroyo and a man said to be Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano—has been so heavy that a website that offered free downloads crashed within an hour due to the sheer volume of requests. The "Hello Garci" ringtone now seems to be the latest, most fashionable cellphone accessory, though understandably none of the telcos dare offer them to subscribers.

Will it be a case of ringtones bringing down the administration, much the same way that text messages helped lead to Erap's downfall?

The President's response to the surfacing of the tapes has so far been confined to ignoring the alleged evidence of poll fraud, on the ground that her time is better spent addressing "more important" issues like economic survival and poverty alleviation. When administration officials do break the pall of silence on the issue, they tend to harp on legalities and technicalities, such as the source of the tapes, the illegality of the very act of tapping telephones, and the culpability of individuals who disseminate or merely possess the "fruits" of illegal wiretapping, though it isn't clear yet if the ringtones would be counted among them.

But the public doesn't seem inclined to let go of the issue just yet, and neither have they been intimidated by the bluster of law enforcers. Doubtless Malacañang believes and hopes "Gloriagate," as the controversy around the tapes has been dubbed, will go the way of most scandals, with a media shelf-life of about a week, gradually fading from public attention as other stories emerge.

* * *

INDEED, we've seen a string of new stories and scandals in the past few days. There's the tax fraud case filed against the family firm of Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap. The "revelation" made by Sgt. Vidal Doble that he was paid P2 million by former NBI official Samuel Ong (who is in turn alleged to have been funded by no less than Erap inamorata Laarni Enriquez) to declare on video that he was the source of the "mother of all tapes" from the Isafp office. And who can forget the aborted attempt at summoning "people power" for Ong himself?

(As an aside, there are those who believe the whole Ong caper may have been the result of Malacañang's machinations, since its bumbling staging has certainly drawn attention away from the tapes themselves, and exposed those disseminating the tapes to ridicule.)

But these stories, while enjoying a brief stint in the headlines, rapidly faded from view. The public has remained remarkably focused on the issue of the tapes. And if responses texted to public affairs radio shows are any indication, the majority believes the tapes are authentic, and that therefore President Arroyo colluded with a Comelec official to "cook" the results of the 2004 elections, placing the legitimacy of her presidency under a cloud of doubt.

This is a perception that cannot just be swept under the red carpets of Malacañang. Especially since public opinion surveys reveal that a substantial number of Filipinos believe the electoral protests should be pursued to the end, even if Ms Arroyo's strongest opponent has died. Knowing for sure who won the 2004 polls "fair and square" is still important to Filipinos, especially to the poor, the majority of whom voted for Fernando Poe Jr.

* * *

THE TAPES go to the heart of the Arroyo presidency, and therefore to the legitimacy of her government.

This is why it's urgent that the President address the question of the tapes' authenticity head-on. Is that her voice on the tapes or not? Is that Garcillano on the other end of the conversation? And did she really talk to him about "massaging" the results, and tampering with electoral documents, in southern Mindanao?

It gives us little comfort to recall that the towns and provinces mentioned in the tapes have long been the arena of contention for the results of national elections. It's no accident that the last election results to arrive at the canvassing almost always emanate from southern Mindanao. Candidates who ran in elections since way, way back have long told stories of how election results in this region are traded. Garcillano came for particularly scathing accusations for what he'd been doing in Mindanao when his name was first mentioned as a possible Comelec commissioner.

* * *

THE TAPES thus have repercussions far beyond President Arroyo herself. If we allow Malacañang to have its way and let the issue just saunter away from our view, then we would have sent the message to our leaders that they can lie and cheat and buy their way to public office.

And if we are willing to tolerate wrongdoing at the basic level of vote-counting and recording, if we show our nation's leaders that we will tolerate their diddling with our votes, if we indicate that we would be willing to look the other way so long as "our" candidate wins, then we would have lost all the right to demand accountability and honesty from them.

The President's refusal to respond to the questions posed by the tapes is feeding popular doubt about her continued right to sit as President.

I don't think anyone really wishes for regime change now, given our fear of instability and knowing what another abrupt transition might mean. But unless the President's legitimacy is established, once and for all, then instability is not just to be expected, it will already be here.

The legend of Aglal-lalaki (2)

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L. Harper

SABONG, in tears, declared that if this were true, a bolt of lightning should reduce her to ashes in that instant. Her father wanted to attack the calumniator but others from his settlement would not come to his aid for one reason or another. Either because he was their friend or they were frightened because the man was husky and daring and had many soldiers.

Sabong and her father were thus reduced to a few faithful slaves and some guards, so that they could do little but bewail the infamy. When Aglal-lalaki arrived, he was immediately informed by his fellow slaves of what had transpired but, giving no sign that it interested him, he turned around and disappeared again.

On the third day, his master having learned of his flight cursed him and was incensed because he needed Aglal-lalaki's strength and valor to take revenge. Suddenly the alarms sounded on the *gansas* (metal gongs) announcing that the headhunters of Abra had attacked the neighboring settlement of the *cacique* who had insulted Sabong. Word was that they were on their way to attack them. Disorderly shouts calling the tribesmen to arms were heard by all but the *aris* were disconcerted by the surprise attack and they did not dare antagonize the invaders.

The savages entered, their eyes flushing with wild furor. With weapons upraised, they attacked the first house which belonged to Sabong's father. They set it on fire while other sacked it and proceeded to strangle the inhabitants. All of a sudden, an order was shouted from the rear to suspend the attack. The invaders made way for someone who advanced from the last row with his lance dyed in blood. They paid him homage by dropping on their knees and bowing their heads. It was the slave Aglal-lalaki wearing a *putong* (turban) of many colors on his head, symbol of previous kills from old battles. He scowled as though anxious for revenge and his countenance bore a terrible aspect.

When his master saw him, he exclaimed: "This is all that was lacking! The gods indubitably have punished me for past injustices committed against Aglal-lalaki." Having said this, he fell unconscious while his daughter, oblivious of the danger, ran to succor him, saying: "Father, take heart! If the gods see that we know how to suffer with resignation, their ire will be placated." And turning to Aglal-lalaki who approached with his sword upraised perhaps to take his revenge on his former master, she exclaimed, "Kill me but have mercy on an old man."

Aglal-lalaki laughed in answer: "Kill you? You who have been so good and to whom I owe my life? Your father contributed to the ruin of mine. He humiliated me afterwards and was very severe. Without you, I would long ago have fallen victim to religious beliefs and been buried alive to accompany your mother in her sepulcher so that she would have had a slave to serve her in her afterlife. Without you, I would not have survived my last illness when I was abandoned like a dog. I would hardly kill your father in your presence."

Sabong continued to cry so that Aglal-lalaki said, "Why do you weep, Star of the Morning? You should be afraid of nothing because you are so good and charitable. I feel that you consider me slave to my savage passions."

"Does this mean that you forgive me but not my father?"

"Kill your father? Even if the whole world had offended me, I would forgive them because of you with the exception of this one who made you cry bitterly." And saying this he threw at her feet the head of the *cacique* who had insulted her.

(It was later discovered that our hero, in his adventurous excursions to Abra to look for orchids, had captured the imagination and respect of the Apayaos and Guinaanes by demonstrating his valor in battle and became their friend. When Sabong despaired at not being able to take revenge for that injury, Aglal-lalaki went to ask for help from his friends in Abra who promptly agreed and attacked the settlement of the *cacique* causing many deaths.)

Aglal-lalaki had enough forces to unseat Sabong's father and proclaim himself the successor, but realizing that he would be resented by the inhabitants, he contented himself with asking for his freedom and having his master declare him a *timmau*. With the service he had rendered, he felt he had paid for his father's debt, the food he had eaten and the clothes on his back. Sabong's father acceded and further offered his daughter in marriage.

Aglal-lalaki answered that he was grateful, but he could not accept the generous offer not because he didn't love her but because being a poor slave, he felt unworthy. Perhaps, he said, in this moment she may love me a little but eventually when her enthusiasm ebbs and her desire for vengeance has been appeased, she will regret the difference in our stations and wish she had married one of her rich and powerful suitors. From her forehead the star of her misfortune will not disappear and then she will be unhappy.

Sabong neither agreed nor disagreed. After bidding her farewell, Aglal-lalaki left for Abra with his friends and joined a settlement as a *baknang*. Here he served the head of the group faithfully and for his services during battle, he was gifted with many goods and slaves. When the chief died, Aglal-lalaki became his successor. It was only then that he felt worthy enough to return to his old home and seek the hand of Sabong.

Their wedding was celebrated for weeks with much merriment and song. Those in neighboring settlements were invited and they danced and prayed to the gods that Sabong and Aglal-lalaki would have a long and fruitful life with many descendants.

("La Ilustracion Filipina," 1893.)

* * *

Comments to bambiharper@yahoo.com

Different?

YOUNG BLOOD

Zyrah Mae Abbas Olermo

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

I GREW up in a Christian community, which is why it is not hard for me to cope with the environment. I know how to deal with the people; I have even become accustomed to different lifestyles.

When I went to college, I decided to study at the Mindanao State University in Marawi City. There I had the opportunity to live in an environment which many people I know consider a "different" one: a Muslim community. It was there where I finally felt that I truly belonged. I was able to deepen my faith and know my religion better.

But I stayed for only a year at MSU, since I had to study in Davao if I wanted to pursue the course I wanted. So I moved to the big city, little knowing I'd face a lot of things that I hadn't expected to happen and eventually learn so much in a world gripped in terror.

When I first arrived in Davao, I immediately sensed that something was wrong. Not with me but with the people around me.

I admit that the city's afternoon sea breeze is quite refreshing and the pleasant sunshine gives me warmth. The whispering wind hugs me and kisses my cheeks every time the sun bids goodbye and the stars that glitter in the sky lift my soul.

One day, I was outside our boarding house, admiring the beauty of nature. Everything seemed so serene, so calm and so perfect—until I recalled what happened during my first 10 months in the city.

I remembered how people used to stare at me as if I had done something wrong or had broken the rules or norms. While on a jeepney, I would notice the other passengers staring at me and observing every little movement I made. When I strolled inside the malls, it seemed as if I was getting everybody's attention. When I ate in a restaurant or fast-food joint, everyone seemed to be looking at me as if I had done something unusual.

Was there anything wrong with me? Was it the way I ate? The way I dressed? The way I talked?

Months have passed and the same attitude still prevails. I feel like I have been handcuffed and I can't do whatever I want to do. I feel like I'm caged and I can't free myself.

Am I different? It seems that I can't speak my mind. Other people are keeping me from doing the things I want to do and from saying the things I want to say. And because of this, I sometime go home in distress and in tears.

I always end up asking why. Maybe it is because of the head scarf (*tandong*) that I wear. After war broke out in Mindanao and in the aftermath of the 9/11, Muslims were in the headlines. Nowadays, Muslims are looked upon with suspicion, as if everyone of us might be a terrorist, a traitor, a war freak, an enemy of peace, or even simply uneducated. I have often asked myself: Because I am a Muslim, am I not free to be who I am? Why can't other people see that like them I also fear war and destruction? That I also cherish peace and tranquility? That I am a human being who seeks justice? Why do I feel so isolated? Others make me feel different although I am not.

I have heard many of my fellow Muslims complain that they felt the same way. But I cannot accept the fact that we, Muslims, are treated as if we were "other people" in our own country. And I can't think of any other way but this to tell the people what an 18-year-old woman feels about what is happening in the world and especially our country.

I cannot deny that these days, Muslim radicals are on the rampage and terrorizing the world. These radicals kill innocent people and cause suffering to many more. But did it ever occur to our fellowmen that we, Muslims, are as affected as they? We feel terribly sorry for the deaths of those innocent people. After all, *qital* or indiscriminate killing is not condoned in Islam. At times, we feel angry that some of our Muslim brothers have gone too far. We all suffer. We all grieve. And we all need peace and justice.

We should not solve a problem by creating another problem, much less resort to violence. As United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan once said, "No cause, however justified, can be advanced by terror."

While I truly feel sorry for fellow Muslims who are as affected as I am, I am deeply concerned that a number of Muslims are being arrested and detained based on flimsy evidence. On top of that, the treatment we get from people around us hurts—something other people may not be aware of.

Most of the time, I feel like I'm glued to the ground and I can't run away from these realities. I feel as if my tongue is stuck and I cannot shout loud enough for the whole world to hear my feelings, because I know no one will listen. But I'm certain that I am not alone and I'm definitely not speaking for myself only but also for my brothers and sisters in Islam. Will somebody please hear us?

Promoting understanding and open-mindedness among peoples seems like an elusive dream. However, I am not about to lose hope. I still believe deep down inside me that peace can be attained if we open our hearts and minds and believe it is within reach. But we can never embrace peace without first having peace within ourselves.

This not about religion. This is not about Muslims being deviant, like what some people think. This is about us, about how we can help achieve the thing called peace and make justice reign in our country.

Zyrah Mae Abbas Olermo, 18, is a second-year AB International Studies student at the Ateneo de Davao University.

NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS:

If you are sending your contributions by e-mail, please address it to youngblood@inquirer.com.ph together with your address and information about your age and the school, course and year you're enrolled in or if employed, the position you're holding and the company you work with.

THEY SAID

Inescapable

"Charter change is inescapable given the political reforms needed by the country."

—Rep. Ronaldo Puno of Antipolo, supporting the proposal for a shift from presidential to parliamentary system of government

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Cha-Cha will be a waste of our scarce resources

I DO not agree with the President's plan to call a constitutional convention "to consider a shift to a federal-type parliamentary system as part of her medium-term economic development plan." Such a proposal would rise or fall on the question of power and the people's level of trust on our politicians.

A parliamentary system combines the executive and legislative powers of the state in one entity. As a practical matter, this means we will be increasing the powers of our politicians. They will not only craft laws but also execute them. Right now, while these powers are still separate, have they used them in such a way as to warrant our greater trust and inspire us to grant them more? My answer is no.

For some of our politicians, federalism seems to have acquired mystical proportions, like the force of the Jedi in the Star Wars movie saga. According to Sen. Aquilino Pimentel, this would speed up economic development and bring just and lasting peace in Mindanao and elsewhere. This is a rather huge leap in conclusion.

A federal system simply means that some powers are reserved for the states or provinces, as the case may be. Thus, until we know what powers will be mandated as exclusively within the purview of the states or provinces, federalism's supposed benefits remain nebulous.

However, what is certain is that the federal states or regions that will be created will require bureaucracies and legislatures of their own. Do we want another level of government on the backs of the people? Can we afford it? How certain are we that, with their increased powers, the local politicians will not become worse oligarchs, as they are now even though their powers are not yet constitutionally specified?

As for the statement of Secretary Ignacio Bunye that "(i)f we would look at the experience of our Asian neighbors, they all have a parliamentary system," he seems to suggest a connection between development and the parliamentary system. There is no such connection. According to Joseph Stiglitz, former chief economist of the World Bank and Nobel Laureate in economics, in East Asia "(e)ach of the most successful globalizing countries determined its own pace of change; each made sure as it grew that the benefits were shared equitably; each rejected the basic tenets of the 'Washington Consensus,' which argued for a minimalist role for government and rapid privatization and liberalization."

We embraced the Washington Consensus through our obedience to the IMF-WB and through the foolish, if not suicidal, way we joined the World Trade Organization. Thus, a shift to the parliamentary system will not develop our economy if we remain on our present course in terms of economic policies. Let us forget about Charter change. It's a total waste of scarce resources. It will be a source of so much discord.

—ELIAS JOSE M. INCIONG,
Unit 301 Union Square Condominium,
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The truth will be proclaimed

"THERE is nothing covered that will not be uncovered, and nothing hidden that will not be known. What I am telling you in the dark, you must speak in the light. What you hear in private, proclaim in the housetops." (Matthew 10:26-33)

Timely words for everyone to ponder in the midst of the unfolding *jueteng* scandal and wiretapping controversy.

To some, the scandals involving the First Family are shocking; to others, they just proclaim "from the housetops" secrets carefully kept and never spoken about in the past.

There has been much talk of fraud in the last 2004 elections. No amount of protests from the opposition and private citizens could stop Congress from proclaiming President Macapagal-Arroyo as the winner in the presidential race. To her allies, she won clean and fair.

But the word of the Lord is crystal clear: "[N]othing will not be uncovered." In God's time, the truth will come out. There are the tapes allegedly products of illegal wiretapping—two were shown by Secretary Ignacio Bunye and one, purportedly the "Mother of all Tapes," by lawyer Samuel Ong. Which is genuine or fake? Who is lying, who is telling the truth? Take your pick. Truth will prevail.

The latest brouhaha is the alleged kidnapping and detention of the person who reportedly tapped the conversation between GMA and an election official. He was able to rejoin his family amid conflicting versions of his stay at the San Carlos Seminary. Another truth or lie to be uncovered?

Both the administration and opposition have ulterior motives in these events. Will the truth set us free?

Who is telling the truth, who is lying? These are hard times but everything will be uncovered.

—MARIO C. ANTEOLA,
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VP De Castro: the peaceful option

SECRETARY Ignacio Bunye says there is no alternative to President Macapagal-Arroyo. That's true only to his simple mind, and it doesn't take away the fact that she isn't fit to run this country anymore.

The country cannot rise again with GMA at the helm. Sen. Aquilino Pimentel is right in demanding GMA's resignation to pave the way for a snap election. But a snap election will take too long and will be costly, divisive and prone to controversy and manipulation just as the 2004 elections were.

If GMA resigns now, she will be treated more kindly by the people and later by history. Ferdinand Marcos and Joseph Estrada had come to know this. But if GMA insists on hanging on to power and dragging us deeper into the mess, she'll be booted out of office, literally, by an angry mob.

The smoothest way to Philippine recovery is GMA's resignation. Not coups, not people power, not US intervention, not a snap election. I'm not a fan of Vice President Noli de Castro, but he gets to inherit the post. He needs all the help he can get. Everybody who wants anybody but GMA should help. He should be acceptable to civil society because it invested in him, and he should be acceptable to the masses because of his roots. He has no bad record yet. I just wish there is no tape of his alleged "AC/DC operations" while he was with the media.

—PERRY HUGO,
pthugo@tri-isys.com

LAIM THE TRUTH!
NOUGH OF GMA'S
BOGUS REGIME!
Play The Tape!
We want th
TRUTH!

MILITANTS rally to denounce alleged poll fraud

PDI PHOTO

GMA has failed to address people's aspirations

WITH the exposé of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's fraudulent victory in the May 2004 elections, the raging "*juetengate* 2" scandal involving the Arroyo family, and other acts of corruption and betrayal of public trust by the Arroyo administration, we are calling for a change of president.

We condemn GMA's stinking record of moral, political and economic transgressions. From January 2001, GMA frustrated the people's aspirations for justice, good governance and meaningful reforms. Before, during and after the May 2004 elections and to this very moment, GMA's promises of economic relief and urgent reforms have not been delivered. Soaring prices, additional taxes and economic burdens have been weighed down like a heavy cross on the back of our suffering poor while the Arroyo family and its allies live in outrageous luxury.

We hold GMA directly accountable for the gross human rights violations and brutal repression by her police and military forces which she has unleashed to suppress the voices of dissent against her corrupt administration.

We envision a genuine democratic government where the people's aspirations are truly heard, and where their interests, human rights and needs are given priority over illegitimate foreign debts and immoral government expenses.

Let us do our share in building a nation where the centuries-old demand of poor farmers, workers and all oppressed sectors for a life of dignity is heard and granted, not just answered by GMA and self-serving public officials with empty election promises.

Let us not allow a grossly corrupt President to continue to rule us.

—AMIE DURAL,
secretary general,
Promotion of Church
People's Response (PCPR),
879 EDSA Quezon City 1101,
batiksunset@yahoo.com

Gov't must do more, not just notify

THERE'S a sign on the Tullahan Bridge at MacArthur Highway in Valenzuela City, which says: "Notice to the public: Tullahan Bridge seriously damaged."

My question is: So? What is the public or the daily commuters supposed to do? No alternate route is given. We see no repair being done. Light and heavy vehicles pass this bridge 24 hours a day.

What has the Department of Public Works and Highways to say about this? If the bridge is seriously damaged, does this mean that we risk our lives passing this bridge every day? Are we waiting for something tragic to happen before the authorities act on this?

—CENDA J. NARVAEZ,
CJNarvaez@unilab.com.ph

Is it Filipino-Chinese or Chinese-Filipino?

THERE seems to be no consistent use of the compound noun Filipino-Chinese (or should it be Chinese-Filipino?) among the Metro dailies.

In the United States, newspapers style book, which we, Pinoys, papers adhere to, there is no such thing as American-Filipino, American-Chinese, American-Jews, American-Italian, etc. It is always Filipino-American, Jewish-American, Italian-American, Chinese-American, etc.

I presume that US editors see it, America is the host country, hence the foreign ethnic group's name precedes the word American. Conversely, it should be Chinese-Filipino.

—BEN S. SIMPAO,
1026-A, Beleu St.,
Paco, Manila

Paramount concern

PRESIDENT Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's continued silence on the issue of the wiretapped conversations adds each day a number of people to the growing list of Filipinos who are convinced that she is the voice in the tapes. Each day that she maintains her silence reflects negatively not only on the office of the presidency but also on her character as a person. If indeed the country, not her personal interest, is her paramount concern, Ms Arroyo should not waste another minute and confront the issue at hand.

—JELO SORIANO,
as45us@yahoo.com

The English advantage of Filipinos

HOW could English destroy Philippine society? In fact, being the international language, English can help a long way in improving the Filipinos' understanding of many subjects, especially in the sciences. Having a good grasp of the English language has helped many Filipinos get jobs abroad over non-English speaking applicants, and in turn help their families rise from poverty and the country from an impaired economy.

The truth is that we do not have a national language. For as long as the Tagalogs insist on their own language, Pilipino will never prosper. If you are not a Tagalog, try to speak Pilipino, and the Tagalogs will laugh at you. Oh, come on. Admit it. How many of the Filipinos truly want Pilipino as the national language? For all practical purposes, English is better used for understanding all communications locally and internationally. It is more pragmatic. More so, English is neutral; it does not pit any Philippine group against another.

—JANE ABAO,
jane2023abao@yahoo.com

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INQBOX

What do you think should President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo do in the wake of the jueteng and audio tape recording scandals?

she should not ignore this issue for this will be the start of destabilization. find a better solution to the problem.
—George pedrosa, 28, *manila*

huling huli na sila kaya aminin nalang nila, wag na sya magturo pa. bakit kc ng ginawa nila un di nila naisip ang resulta sa huli, tapos ngaun gusto nila lusutan ang gusot nila, aminin nalang kc.
—josephine esguerra, 26, *bacoor, cavite*

No amount of denial can erase d doubt in d minds of d people. GMA shud do wat Inquirer is doing best-telling d Truth!
—henry bonagua, 34, *castillejos, zambales*

if d tapes are true, she must admit it, ask forgiveness 2 people n god, resign. be good example of an honorable god-fearing filipino
—armond ferriols, 40, *batangas city*

use d money she made frm juetng 2 mass produce her audio tapes 4 worldwide release. Den pay our loans, eh di hero
—ramon g. lukban, 48, *q.c.*

Gloria M Arroyo is not guilty of jueteng but guilty of election cheating, she should confess and pray for forgiveness
—Gilbert T. Bangilan, 35, *Taguig*

she shud not cOmment. silence s d best defense after all. she shud jst cOncentrate On her jOb, all d issues wil eventually die.
—Kristine Jimenez, 17, *legazpi*

Humarap sya sa taong-bayan. If guilty, magRESIGN sya. If not, clear her name. Tapos, magRESIGN sya. Nowhere to go.
—Alexander A. Lebantino, 27, *Pampanga*

bet her lucky number and take voice lessons? Ü
—Bernard Dujali, *Panabo City*

GMA shud come out in d open and face her accusers... Having cheated her way 2 malacañang, we DESERVE an HONEST answer at d least!
—gv cunada, 24, *iloilo city*

She needs 2 seek 4 divine guidance dat dis issue wil b resolved, by d help of God, truth & justice will prevail.
—Alira Magno, 18, *Davao*

This is the best time to show SINCERITY in HER WORDS, No one is ABOVE D LAW. Even HER SON IF PROVEN GUILTY. RESIGN if NEEDED.
—vilma dee, 48, *los piñas*

GMA should /must investigate her son & relatives if involved in jueteng & give her side regarding audio tape scandals.
—Chris Trompeta, 41, *iloilo city*

stay in office n be cool coz d people hos behind all of dis is not d silent majority, dey are millions of filipinos hu r supporting d president
—Jose, 30, *oroquieta*

She should SPEAK UP so that d PEOPLE will know IF DAT IS TRUE, DEFEND herself.
—Laureta p. quinonas, 53, *pasay city*

To preserve whatever DIGNITY AND HONOR left for HER and HER FAMILY, SHE must RESIGN!
—Oscar Sala, 52, *davao city*

kapal moks na talga cya kung di nya pa jail pamilya nya nu! Kung ako cya, I'l choose na wher to detain my family! Haha!
—Mary jox soria, 23, *digos city*

Hire qualified persons to build school, hospital, road. Den hire teachers, doctors, nurses give dem good salary 2 please people.
—Mary Ann Sanchez, 23, *Calamba City*

the most honorable thing to do is to resign and let the independent authorities prove her innocence...
—noel b Madrid, *sta.maria, bulacan*

If the President tends to deny this issue, she needs to explain it to d public, and not to always close up...
—Jereon de Leon, 13, *magalang*

she shud ask forgiveness frm estrda loyals. Erap steppd down on moral allegation. She must do d same. or be ousted d same way
—mary jox soria, 23, *digos city*

tell the people the truth coz only truth can set her and this country free. AKSYUNAN na agad yan for the entire country's sake.
—Gladys Solomon, 25, *Natividad, Pang.*

Allow free flow of investigation by stopping Justice Sec. Gonzales from threatening witnesses.
—marco bernardo, *baguio city*

first examine her conscience, if she knows her family is lying, cheating and stealing, then she should humbly resign.
—gerry e. Gamez, 39, sampaloc, manila

madame president, many of us have no alternative but you, still, speak d truth and it will set you free..
—marco antonio tejada, 40, *Lucena city*

be like Nixon.
—Joseph Cedric S. Esguerra, 37, *Kidapawan City*

Dear Readers, Text us your comments, suggestions and views on today's news or how it was delivered. Tell us about the news you are interested in and the things you want improved in your favorite newspaper. Text INQUIRER <section keyword> name/city/message and send to 283 (Smart) or 2207 (Globe). The section keywords are indicated in the logo of each section.

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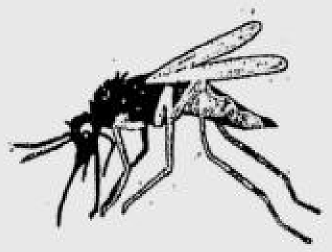
Cerebral malaria kills 1 in GenSan

IN THE KNOW

Cerebral malaria

Cerebral malaria is the most severe form of malaria that affects the brain and the central nervous system. Complications include coma, seizures and renal failure. In severe cases, neurological dysfunction can manifest suddenly following a seizure or gradually over a period of hours. Patients with cerebral malaria commonly have anemia and jaundice as well. Convulsion occurs in 50 percent of adult cases and an even higher proportion among children. Around 10 percent of children with cerebral malaria, particularly those with hypoglycemia—low blood sugar—, had repeated seizures or went into deep coma with evidence of brain damage when they regain consciousness.

Cerebral malaria is caused by the infection of a parasite known as Plasmodium Falciparum which is transmitted to humans through the bites of infected female mosquitoes. Other parasites causing malaria are Plasmodium Vivax, Malariae and Ovale.



According to the Department of Health there are around 100,000 victims of malaria everyday.

Sources: http://health.iafrica.com/doconline/malaria/cerebral.htm; www.priory.com/malay.htm; www.expat.or.id/medical/malariaupdate.html; www.malaria site.com and PDI News Archive

Chona Galang, PDI Research

By Aquiles Z. Zonio
PDI Mindanao Bureau

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—A person died while 18 others were taken ill by what village officials said was an outbreak of cerebral malaria in Apopong village here.

Most of the victims were residents of Purok Lorenzo in Apopong.

Barangay kagawad Roger Lambot told reporters here that based on an investigation conducted by village officials, the number of affected residents had already reached 28 on Monday morning.

Mayor Pedro Acharon Jr. said the Department of Health had declared it an outbreak as there was more than 50 percent increase in the number of malaria cases recorded during the period this year.

Acharon said not a single case of malaria was recorded during the same period last year.

Outbreak basis

"I conferred with the DOH officials (over) what is their bases in considering this incident an outbreak and they told me that it was because the recorded cases of malaria since January up to this month was 50 percent higher than the same period last year," he said.

The mayor revealed that based on his information there were only seven confirmed malaria cases, not 28 as reported by the media.

Benjamin Pagarigan, director of the government-owned City Integrated Hospital (CIH), told the INQUIRER that as of this writing, 18 patients afflicted with malaria had already been admitted to the CIH.

Medicine supply

However, he said, the situation of the patients was getting better and there was no problem as to the supply of medicine contrary to media reports.

Acharon allayed fears of local residents, saying there was no cause for alarm.

Fogging

He said he would direct local health workers to conduct fogging operations particularly in public schools.

He also emphasized to the public the importance of maintaining cleanliness in the surroundings to drive away mosquitoes.

He also urged local residents to immediately consult a doctor whenever they suffer from high fever.

Luisita farmers shift to corn growing amid row

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Finding themselves without a refinery amid a dragging labor dispute at the Cojuangco family-owned Hacienda Luisita, small landowners and tenant-farmers in seven Tarlac towns have abandoned sugar farming in at least 1,825 hectares, planting these to corn.

The shift from sugar to corn farming, observed since the start of the cropping season in January this year, appeared to be a long-term alternative, according to Eduardo Gonzales, assistant director of the Department of Agriculture in Central Luzon.

This was because cultivators have sought seed subsidies, technical assistance, incentive allowance, financial counterparts for the purchase of equipment and market linkages from the DA, Gonzales said.

The town with the biggest areas converted to corn was Concepcion, at 1,358 ha. Corn is beginning to be grown now in 180 ha in Pura; 100 ha, Paniqui; 77 ha, Capas; 50 ha, Ramos; 40 ha, Tarlac City; and 20 ha, Victoria, regional DA reports showed.

These lands comprised 19 percent of the 10,121 ha of potential corn areas in Tarlac, north of here.

More than 500 ha of sugar lands in Magalang and Mabalacat towns in Pampanga, just at the southeastern boundary of Tarlac, have been also planted to corn, mostly of the Bt variety.

Gonzales said the resumption of planting, albeit with an entirely new crop, absorbed about 2,000 farm workers,

Because of the shift, he anticipated a dip in local sugar production by the end of the year.

"We are looking at a deficit at the local level but this will be compensated by the total national production," he said, adding that Negros province alone could ensure sufficient supply.

He said the outcome of the conflict at the Luisita sugar mill would also determine the fate of Tarlac as Central Luzon's biggest sugar-producing province.

The Cojuangco estate alone covers not less than 16,000 ha of sugar land cultivated under the controversial stock distribution option scheme in which farm workers get profit shares than actual land ownership.

This setup has become a contentious issue in the labor row, prompting the Department of Land Reform to do a review of the land tenure issue.

While the crop conversion threatens to diminish the position of Tarlac in the sugar industry, the strike and the riot that ensued between protesting workers and government soldiers in November last year already led to an estimated P2 billion in losses in agriculture and local taxes alone, it was learned.

Palawan part of West Visayas by August

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—The turnover of Palawan and Puerto Princesa City from Southern Tagalog to Western Visayas will be completed by August, according to the Department of Interior and Local Government.

Evelyn Trompeta, DILG director for Western Visayas, said the DILG regional offices in the two regions are coordinating with their Regional Development Councils (RDCs) for the implementation of Executive Order 429.

The EO, signed by President Macapagal-Arroyo early this month, mandated the transfer of Palawan and Puerto Princesa City from Southern Tagalog to Western Visayas to "accelerate the effective administration of field and public services."

Trompeta said the inventory and turnover of assets and personnel of Palawan would be completed by the first week of July while the transfer of finances was expected to be implemented by August.

Western Visayas governors have welcomed the inclusion of Palawan and Puerto Princesa City in the region, saying this will help boost the region's income and tourism industry.

Antique Gov. Salvacion Zaldivar-Perez, RDC chair, said because of the transfer, Western Visayas now hosts two major tourist destinations including Boracay Island.

Army announces arrest of top NPA leader in Bicol

LEGAZPI CITY—The Philippine Army based in Albay arrested the alleged secretary of the New People's Army (NPA) Guerrilla Front Committee 79, which operates in the Bicol region, at about 3 p.m. on June 19.

Elmer Osila, also known by his aliases as Ka Israel, Ka Rolly, Ka Gomer, Ka Ador and Ka Nilo, 45, was arrested in the boundary of Camalig and Guinobatan towns in Albay after a tip-off from residents in the area.

Maj. Gen. Ricardo Nobleza, commander of the 9th Infantry Division of the Philippine Army, said Osila was arrested by elements of the 901st Infantry Brigade while he was in a blue XRM Honda motorcycle with license plate EL 8325.

Nobleza said Osila showed his driver's license bearing the name Isidro Reyes Encinares but he was positively identified by former members of the NPA as the secretary of NPA GFC 79.

He added that Osila, who did not resist arrest, was turned over by Col. Arsenio Arugay, commanding officer of the 901st IB to the PNP provincial command.

The Philippine Army, however, refused to say whether it is the Albay or the Sorsogon police office it was referring to.

It further declined to divulge the exact location where Osila was being detained for security purposes.

It said that Osila, who is also the alleged leader of NPA operations in Sorsogon province, has four standing warrants of arrest issued by the regional trial court in Sorsogon for murder and kidnapping.

In Sorsogon City, Osila cried torture in the hands of his military interrogators during the almost two days that he was held captive in a military camp.

He was turned over by Army personnel to the Sorsogon district jail of the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology at noon yesterday.

Osila said he was subjected to various forms of physical torture by the interrogators after he was apprehended in Sitio City, Barangay Mauraro, Guinobatan, Albay at about 4 p.m. on June 18. (The military said it was June 19). *Jed Ll. Bacason and Bobby Q. Labalan, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Mining execs say Sipalay mines hold ₱47.6B in copper deposits

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—The Mines and Geosciences Bureau in Western Visayas (MGB) said prospects for the resumption of mining in Sipalay City, Negros Occidental are bright with the value of copper deposits estimated to reach around P47.6 billion.

Leo Van Juguan, MGB regional director, said the increasing price of copper could encourage the Maricalum Mining Corp. to reopen its cooper mines in Barangay San Jose.

Maricalum's mines have an estimated 400 million tons of copper ore, which could yield some P47.6 billion with prices current pegged at $1.5 per pound.

Juguan said the reopening would be viable for Maricalum because the company already has an existing plant and pieces of equipment. He said the estimated cost of reviving the operations of the mines would reach around P300 million mainly for plant rehabilitation.

Since 1957

The mines, which started operating in 1957, were shut down on July 1, 2001, over a labor dispute and complaints of environmental pollution. The closure left more than 5,000 people jobless.

Philex Gold Phils, Inc. another large-scale mining firm, closed down its gold mine in Barangay Nabulao on July 1, 2002.

There is no existing large-scale mining in Western Visayas after the closure of the Sipalay mines.

Sipalay City welcomes the revival of its mining industry that can earn the city millions of pesos in revenues.

According to a press release from the MGB, the Sipalay City Council passed a resolution on April 21 saying that it was interested in allowing mining in the city.

In the resolution, the council said there was still "a considerable volume of gold and copper deposits underneath the vast mining areas."

It said the mines would give a much-needed boost to jobs and revenues of the city.

Mining operations are among the major revenue earners of Western Visayas. Small-scale mining, quarry, and sand and gravel operations netted P142.8 million last year, MGB records showed.

Mineral production in Western Visayas peaked around 15 years ago, when mineral production poured in P3.9 billion to the local economy.

It dropped to P1.5 billion in 1995, but increased to P1.7 billion in 2000.

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COA says Iloilo spent too much for food, meals

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—Calls for austerity have apparently failed to temper the Iloilo provincial government's appetite for food and lavish meals, an audit report showed.

In a five-page Audit Observation Memorandum dated Jan. 7, 2005, the Commission on Audit (COA) said the provincial government spent "extravagantly, excessively and unconscionably" on food for guests and for catering services during conferences and consultative meetings.

The report, addressed to Iloilo Gov. Niel Tupas Sr., covered audited disbursements on food for guests and catering services from July 2003 to June last year amounting to P3,546,442.01.

In most occasions, the report noted, the menu included from six to 13 dishes costing from P200 to P430.77 per person.

The report was prepared by State Auditor IV Daisylyn Tavarro, audit team leader, and reviewed by State Auditor V Arlene Togonon, COA regional cluster director.

Togonon said in an interview that the expenses and the number of dishes served were "extravagant and excessive" based on COA circulars and the Government Accounting and Auditing Manual.

One of the biggest expenses was incurred on July 15, 2003, during a visit of President Macapagal-Arroyo. The province paid P222,280 through Check No. 0002748830 to Tatoy's Manokan and Seafoods, a popular restaurant along the shoreline in Arevalo District.

The cost for the meals amounted to P430.777 per person, according to the report.

The province also paid P15,417 or P376 per person to the same restaurant for meals during a medical mission on Aug. 14, 2003.

The report also noted that meal expenses for a legislative consultation of Vice Gov. Roberto Armada with barangay officials on Sept 25, 2003, amounted to P49,000 covering 196 persons (or P250 per person) which was paid to Bolilao's Helen and Nato Talabahan and Seafoods Restaurant.

The audit team noted that attendance sheets during these occasions were "not properly monitored."

"There were instances wherein some persons signed the attendance sheet twice and others thrice during the same day for the same occasion," said the report.

It also noted that some signed the attendance sheet under the same name but in different handwritings "placing doubt on the authenticity of the document."

FARM LIFE
A young woman weeds a field on the world-famous rice terraces of the Cordillera. Water disputes between villages have left some of the rice fields without water and in ruins.
JAY DIRECTO/AFP

Land reform execs laud clan for not fighting CARP

MATI, Davao Oriental—The Department of Land Reform here hailed the landed Almario clan for being "very supportive" of the government's program.

Provincial Agrarian Reform Officer 2 Benjamin Luz said among the landed clans or what he called "political and economic elites" in the province, only the Almarios did not resist when the government moved to have their at least 600-hectare Hacienda Mayo covered by the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP).

The Almarios, family of the Rep. Mayo Almario, voluntarily sold to government its 617-hectare cacao and coconut plantation, which is now owned by 408 farmers.

In contrast, Luz said, the family of former Rep. Rosalind Lopez put up a strong resistance to their land being covered by CARP.

"We have problems with the Lopezes because they don't want their hacienda covered by CARP," he said.

The CARP implementation in the province has turned bloody as politically influential hacienderos have resorted to violence, according to a group of agrarian reform beneficiaries here.

On May 13, the president of an organization of agrarian reform beneficiaries in the province, Della de Castro, was gunned down inside her house in San Isidro town. *Ferdinand O. Zuasola, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

The GARCI tapes:
SA LIKOD NG pagba- BALITA
Isang special report. Huwebes, alas 10 n.g. sa ABC
INQ TV

INQBOX
Question of the Week
Do you think that President Gloria Arroyo still has the credibility to lead our nation? Why or why not?
Senders of d best 20 texts as publishd in Tuesday's INQBOX *wiL each receiv an *Inquirer Mug! U*
Win this *Inquirer mug
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[illegible] 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)
(Maximum of 160 characters)
*Metro Manila winners can call Jane at 8978808.
Provincial winners can text:
Inquirer ad name/age/city/mailing address to 2207 or 283 as their prizes will be mailed to them.

Commentator held in NBI entrapment operation

By Carla P. Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—A radio commentator was arrested on Saturday in an entrapment operation conducted by agents of the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) for alleged extortion on a traffic officer.

The NBI filed robbery-extortion charges against Rudy Paclibar, host of "Bull's Eye," aired over radio station dyRL in Bacolod, at the city prosecutor's office.

Paclibar was allegedly caught receiving P2,000 in marked money from Traffic Officer 3 Edgardo Agtoto of the Bacolod Traffic Authority in an entrapment operation on Gatuslao Street at about 6:45 p.m. on Saturday.

Paclibar denied he asked money from Agtoto, saying the traffic officer only wanted to retaliate because he had been attacking Agtoto in his radio program.

Embarrassed

"The incident brought embarrassment to me and my whole family and I was deeply hurt. I am hoping that God will forgive you for what you have done to me," he added.

The entrapment operation came from a complaint of Agtoto that Paclibar had been lambasting the traffic officer in his radio program for using a government vehicle outside the city without securing a trip ticket from the mayor's office.

Agtoto claimed that Paclibar told him that he would see to it that the supposed irregularity would be printed in a local paper and would be picked up by the other stations unless he paid the commentator P2,000.

The traffic officer decided to go to the NBI and an entrapment operation on Gatuslao Street was set.

NBI Bacolod chief Primitivo Najera said they invited a local TV crew to witness the operation and the arrest of Paclibar.

Paclibar said Agtoto asked to meet him on Gatuslao Street because he had something for the commentator.

Settlement

He added he agreed to go there because he thought that the rift between them had been settled following their confrontation on Friday where he told Agtoto that his attacks against the traffic officer were "constructive criticisms."

Paclibar said he thought the meeting ended amicably after he promised not to discuss the same issue against Agtoto over his program the next day.

When he arrived on Gatuslao Street, Paclibar said Agtoto did not talk to him. Then Agtoto's cellular phone rang. The traffic officer handed him money, which he placed in his pocket.

He said Agtoto took his wallet and gave Paclibar another undetermined amount.

"In good faith, I accepted the money because I thought we were friends and that the problem between us had been settled," Paclibar said.

After a few minutes, Paclibar said he was surprised when persons who identified themselves as NBI agents approached him and arrested him.

READY FOR THE RAIN

RENY PAMPOLINA/PCPO MALACAÑANG

President Arroyo gestures during her speech in San Jose Cultural Center, Barangay Poblacion, San Jose, Surigao del Norte for the awarding of Certificates of Land Ownership and individual land titles and turnover of foreign-assisted projects.

7 cultists nabbed for digging tunnel

By Carla P. Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—Is it divine spirit or just the quest for gold that prompts seven members of the Philippine Benevolent Missionaries Association (PBMA) to dig a tunnel in Don Salvador Benedicto town, Negros Occidental?

The PBMA members were arrested on Thursday for digging a tunnel at Spur 18, Purok Gmelina, Barangay Bunga, Don Salvador Benedicto, about 47 km northwest of this city, without a permit from the municipal government.

Don Salvador Benedicto Mayor Cynthia de la Cruz said charges of violation of the Forestry Code of the Philippines would be filed against the PBMA members because some natural-grown lauan trees were cut, which the suspects used for shelter and beams for their tunnels.

Aside from this, she added the PBMA members could be charged with mining and digging a tunnel without permit from the municipal government.

The mayor said many people in the area had suspected that the PBMA members were searching for gold in the area and not for "divine spirits" as they had claimed.

De la Cruz also noted seized from the suspects were pails, hard hats, boots, oxygen, mercury for drawing out gold and a cart to pull out whatever was retrieved from the tunnel.

Foreigners and vehicles were allegedly seen at the site believed to be carrying away whatever had been found in the tunnel.

But Perfecto Gutib Sienes, 57 and head of the group, said his group was looking for the "light at the end of the tunnel" where they believed the divine spirit lived beneath the earth.

He said in an interview with RGMA radio station that this was necessary so they could find powers to cure others.

Opening the tunnel, he added, was the second stage while the area where they had dug up was the 14th stage in their quest for the divine spirit.

He did not say how many more stages they had to go to reach the "divine spirit."

Aside from Sienes, also arrested were Raymond Alpon Carpentero, 30, of Bacolod; Santos Ambad Ludovico Jr., 26, of Cebu; Ray Soreno Villaflores, 21, of Negros Oriental; Efren Opiasa Escarro, 55, of Bacolod; Pablo Rulaes Sedillo Jr., 37, of Amlan town in Negros Oriental; and Isidro Dalmar Regalo, 40, Tanjay City in Negros Oriental.

Two other women companions of the group were also brought in for questioning.

De la Cruz, with a team of police and Department of Environment and Natural Resources personnel, conducted an ocula inspection of the tunnel las Saturday.

DENR forest management specialist Arthur Tubera said based on the findings of DENR scaler Anacleto Buaron, the group cut about .59 cubic meters of trees for thei bunkhouse and for use as poles in their tunnel.

W. Visayas council endorses forest reserve in Negros as protected area

By Carla P. Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—The Regional Development Council in Western Visayas on Friday endorsed the bid of Negros Occidental to have the 80,454.5-hectare North Negros Forest Reserve (NNFR) declared a protected area, Gov. Joseph Marañon said.

The governor said the area needed to be declared a protected area since the NNFR is the largest watershed in Negros Occidental, being the source of water for 17 local government units in central and northern Negros.

The RDC endorsement was a welcome development as it is required before the President can declare the NNFR a protected area.

Law needed

Marañon said that aside from a presidential proclamation, the provincial government would also push for Congress to pass a law to ensure the protection of the area.

The NNFR covers 42 barangays in the cities of Talisay, Silay, Victorias, Cadiz, Sagay and San Carlos and the towns of EB Magalona, Toboso, Calatrava, Don Salvador Benedicto and Murcia.

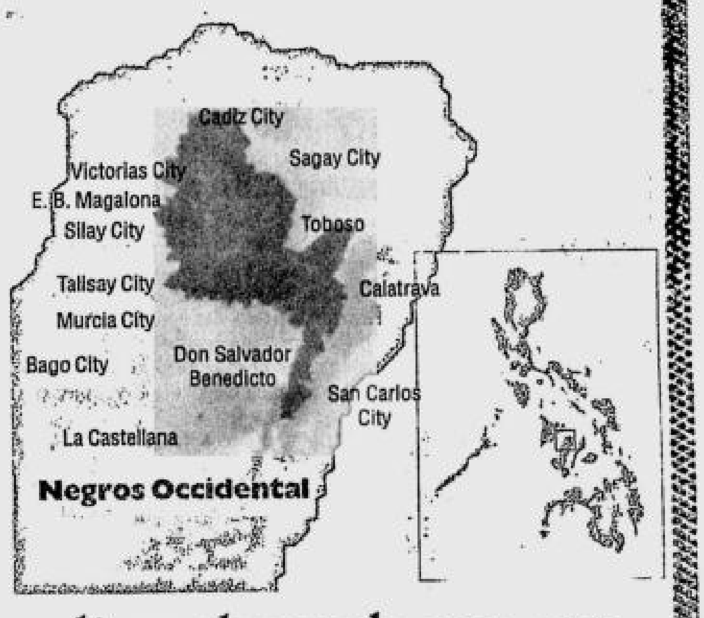
The NNFR is also home to endangered species of flora and fauna not found elsewhere in the world such as the Philippine Spotted Deer, Visayan Warty Pig, Hornbills and Bleeding Heart Pigeon, a report from the governor said.

Birds

The area has been identified by Birdlife International as an "International Bird Area" with 140 species of birds recorded, or almost all the forest birds of Negros Occidental, the report said.

The NNFR also has 166 species of trees but they are confronted by threats of encroachment, illegal timber poaching, hunting and soil erosion, the report added.

PROTECTED AREA



Mindoro group backs parliamentary, federalism through con-con

CITY OF CALAPAN—A group calling itself the Concerned Citizens of Oriental Mindoro for a Meaningful Constitutional Reform is pushing for the immediate passage of a resolution by Congress calling for a constitutional convention, according to Bert Almonte, regional convenor of the Philippine Community Organizers Society and co-convenor of the initiative.

More than a hundred participants from the academe, churches, Mangyans, women, farmers, fisher folk, senior citizens and students signed the Civil Society Unity Declaration for Constitutional Convention at the end of the one-day provincial forum on constitutional reform held at the Jose Leido Memorial High School, Calapan City on Saturday.

"We are conscious of the effects of the presidential form of government in promoting personality-oriented elections and the inefficient executive-legislative relations that often result in either gridlocks, expensive pork barrel arrangements, or instability," the declaration said.

Ramon Casiple, executive director of the Institute for Electoral and Political Reforms, discussed the economic and social justice provisions, while lawye Ligorio Turano talked on the importance of constitutional reforms. *Madonna T. Virola, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Cops open passage in Benguet mine picket

BAGUIO CITY—Acting on a return-to-work order issued by Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas, police punched through a wall of strikers last weekend to allow food and workers to enter the Lepanto Consolidated Mining Corp. (LCMC) mining site in Mankayan, Benguet.

Chief Supt. Noe Wong, Cordillera police director, reported yesterday that 50 members of the Benguet police mobile group had been stationed at Barangay Sapid, where one of five Lepanto gates is located, to safeguard the flow of supplies into the firm's operations in Mankayan.

Injuries

Dispersal actions have been mounted since Friday last week.

Ninian Langayan, president of the Lepanto Employees Union, said two brothers were injured when police tried to break the Sapid picket line.

Wong said the casualty report may be exaggerated. "I don't know of any violence [that occurred at Mankayan]. Besides, the people manning the picket lines are not even employees or their families, but [members and wives of the militant Kilusang Mayo Uno], who are not supposed to be there," he said.

"We have been lenient. We only opened one gate, to ensure the easy flow of supplies, and police have tolerated the presence of the strikers as long as they stay away from the gates," he said.

Langayan said the parents of the two injured brothers were also harassed when police aimed their rifles at them while manning the picket line at 2:30 a.m. on Monday.

Intervention

He said Mayor Materno Luspian had intervened and was helping to reopen talks between the LEU and Lepanto managers.

"LEU is open to talks. Management is also open to talks," Langayan said.

Negotiations for a new collective bargaining agreement broke down over wages. Sto. Tomas has assumed jurisdiction over the case and has proposed a salary increase of P25 in the first year of the collective bargaining agreement coverage that is retroactively applicable to Nov. 17, 2004; P27 for November this year, and P29 for November next year, Langayan said.

LEU will still discuss the Department of Labor and Employment wage formula but Langayan said the offer is sound provided the mine firm also agrees to a clause in a memorandum of agreement promising strikers there will not be any retaliatory action for the work shutdown.

He said the agreement should also place a cap on retrenchments for the duration of the new CBA to assure strikers they would not be displaced. *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Prosecutor backs filing of slander vs vice mayor

TARLAC CITY—Saying the accused was "probably guilty," the provincial prosecutor's office has recommended the filing in court of a slander by deed charge against Vice Mayor Teresita Cabal, who slapped a local newspaper editor several times on May 30.

"Based on affidavits and other supporting documents submitted by the complainant, it is shown that the crime of slander by deed has been committed and the respondent is probably guilty," Prosecutor Claudio Dayaon said in a resolution.

Cabal said she slapped Arvin Cabalu, executive editor of the provincial weekly Tarlac Standard, because he accused her of being a "jueteng" operator.

This was after she refused to be "arm-twisted into giving him the sole right to publication contracts in her office," the vice mayo said.

But she said she slapped him only once.

The slapping happened during a press conference on the conversion of street lots into residential lots, which Cabalu's paper earlie exposed.

In a June 7 affidavit, Cabalu said he felt "dishonored" when the vice mayor slapped, cursed and insulted him in the presence of many people.

"The case was nothing big so the prosecutor opted to file it directly to the municipal trial court without the benefit of a pre-conference," Cabal said. *Russell Arador, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

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1st trolley waste bins roll in Muntinlupa

By Jocelyn R. Uy

MULTICOLORED trolley bins, the first in Metro Manila, will soon roll along the "riles" in Muntinlupa City.

The two trolley bins, which would be plying the Philippine National Railways (PNR) in Barangay Sucat, will soon collect garbage from railroad track dwellers, said engineer Tony Ponciano of the city's Environment Sanitation Center (ESC).

The Barangay Sucat Mini-River Council said one of the major pollutants of the Laguna de Bay was garbage from the railroad track residents.

"Our garbage trucks had never been able to enter the area to collect their garbage. This is what prompted us to launch the trolley bin project to help in our garbage collection efforts in the area," he said.

The project was in line with their aim of intensifying the implementation of Republic Act No. 9003 or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000, he added.

Ponciano said households living in the area would often burn their garbage, a violation of the Clean Air Act of 1999.

"Since they did not have the means to get rid of their garbage, they resorted to burning it, which is bad for the environment," he said.

The two trolley bins would each bear signs to help railway residents practice proper waste segregation, Ponciano said.

Each trolley bin costs P5,000 to P6,000. 'Nonbiodegradable' and 'biodegradable' signs would be posted on each of the bins.

Apart from the signs, schedules for the collections would be posted on the trolley bins, he said.

Nonrecycled materials would be gathered on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, while Tuesdays and Thursdays would be reserved for recycled items, the ESC said.

The collected wastes would be brought to a transfer station at the intersection of Posadas Village in Sucat, after which these would be collected by ESC personnel and brought to the material recovery facilities in Barangay Alabang and Tunasan.

Representatives from Barangay Sucat Mini-River Council, together with the Barangay Sucat officials and the ESC, will meet Thursday to discuss the operations.

"We have yet to talk about the delegation of responsibilities on the operation of the trolley bins," Ponciano said.

Soon after they finalize the schedule of collections and form an enforcement brigade, the ESC would conduct a dry run for about a week.

"That way, we would be able to test the trolley bins' sustainability," Ponciano said.

Residents along the railways in Barangay Sucat welcomed the move. "They were very receptive when we visited them to discuss the project. They said they wanted their place to be clean," according to Ponciano.

The trolley bins, which were turned over yesterday morning to Barangay Sucat Mini-River Council officials in the presence of Metropolitan Manila Development Authority Chair Bayani Fernando, would also be brought to seven other barangays in Muntinlupa City.

Fernando commended Mayor Jaime Fresnedi, Vice-Mayor Aldrin San Pedro and Councilor Raul Corro, who assisted Fernando during the turnover ceremonies, and Muntinlupa residents for their efforts to enforce the waste segregation scheme in the city.

BASURANG-DI
NABUBULOK
KINUKOLEKTA NGAYON

AT THE launch were ESC head Lorna Misa, Councilor Raul Corro, Vice Mayor Aldrin San Pedro and MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando.

MARINES
344

JUST FOR DISPLAY

Armored personnel carriers parked at the Araneta Center Sunday evening did not bring about coup jitters, but only curious shoppers and bystanders who wanted their photographs taken with soldiers and Marines in the area who were recruiting new members.

RYAN LIM

Greening of Makati extends to Cembo

By Tarra V. Quismundo

SOME 125,000 trees for a bustling city of half a million people.

Bent on reaching this goal as soon as possible, Makati's Department of Environmental Services (DES) is set to plant more than 1,000 trees all over the city to mark the environment month.

"We need more trees and green landscapes in the city, with the continuous degradation of the quality of the air we breathe," said Moises Camacho, an engineer who heads the city's Parks and Greens Division, the lead agency in the city-initiated tree planting program.

On Friday, city officials and representatives from private firms and environmental groups will plant 700 molave and flowering April Shower trees on center islands, sidewalks and other vacant areas within and around the Cembo Sports Complex in Barangay Cembo, Makati City.

"This would be simultaneous with tree planting activities in the city's 33 barangays. There would be 500 trees spread throughout the city's sidewalks and easements," said Camacho.

The trees, grown saplings that could be as tall as 12 feet, were sourced through a partnership with the Makati Environment Foundation Inc.

The activities on Friday would be the first installment in a yearlong tree planting program that aims to boost the city's "green population" by 10,000 trees.

Since the city's tree planting program began in 1992 with the planting of at least 2,000 trees a year, Camacho said the local government's efforts had accomplished roughly 60 percent of Makati's tree requirement scheme. "We need 50,000 more trees," he said.

METROBRIEFS

Printing press raided for GMA posters

THE NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation yesterday raided a printing press in Quezon City that allegedly reproduced posters depicting President Macapagal-Arroyo as the infamous local comic book villain Valentina. NBI agents raided Always Graphic and Printing Services at 74-A Molave St., Project 3, Quezon City, after a search warrant was issued by a Quezon City Regional Trial Court judge, according to Interpol chief Ricardo Diaz who said the printing press also made high-quality posters showing the President clad in a Darna costume. Diaz said he ordered the immediate arrest of everyone in the vicinity, including laborers. Charges of violating Article 154 of the Revised Penal Code, or unlawful use of means of publication and unlawful utterances, would be filed against them, he added. The Interpol chief added that they would also file inciting to sedition charges against the owner of the printing press, if proven that he or she had been participating in the destabilization activities against the government. *Margaux C. Ortiz*

Job fair at PNP Center

THE PHILIPPINE National Police, in cooperation with other government agencies and the private sector, will be holding a job fair to offer employment opportunities to those affected by the government campaign against "jueteng," according to Northern Police District Director Chief Supt. Raul Gonzales. The Philippine Association of Service Exporters Inc. (Pasei), an organization of legit recruitment agencies, in coordination with the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) and the Philippine Overseas Employment Authority (POEA), will sponsor the event on June 24 from 1-5 p.m., and from 8-5 p.m on June 25 at the PNP Multi-Purpose Center at the PNP headquarters in Quezon City. Gonzales added that the project is in accordance with the PNP's mandate to prevent crime and to provide strategies and mechanics to accomplish this objective. *Nancy C. Carvajal*

PNB'S LITTLE MISS PHILNABANK CLUB

The Philnabank Club, the Philippine National Bank's 57-year-old sociocultural association, recently held the coronation pageant of its Little Miss Philnabank Club 2005 at the PNB Financial Center, Pasay City. In the contest for PNB employees' next-of-kin, Naomi Bianca Sandoval (3rd from left), a PNB print ad model and the 5-year-old daughter of IT Group's Larry Sandoval, won the title over other finalists (from left): Gabby Patricia Mercado, Camille Joyce Bustos (1st runner-up), Mirzi Mae Agana and Mary Angeli Abenales. With the finalists are Philnabank Club officers.

WPD 2nd in roster of districts with least crimes

By Margaux C. Ortiz

CONTINUING efforts of its law enforcers in combating crime, with the help of civilian police trackers and nongovernment organizations, have placed the Western Police District (WPD) second on the list of districts with the least crimes committed in the metropolis.

A report presented to the media in a forum last week showed that a total of 965 crimes were committed in the city of Manila for the period of January to April 2005.

The Eastern Police District (EPD) topped the list with the smallest crime volume of only 472 incidents.

Police Chief Supt. Pedro Bulaong, WPD head, said the Central Police District (CPD) recorded 1,151 crimes, while the Southern Police District (SPD) and Northern Police District (NPD) respectively recorded 1,349 and 1,434 criminal incidents.

Bulaong also said the WPD had the second lowest number of incidents of car theft in Metro Manila, with only 35 recorded cases.

Car theft

The CPD topped the list of most stolen cars, with 151 recorded incidents, while the SPD was a close second with 100.

The NPD, on the other hand, had only 23 recorded car theft cases, Bulaong said.

The WPD head also said that robbery remains the top crime in the city of Manila.

According to a report on crime statistics for the same period, 44 cases of robbery were recorded in the Moriones (Tondo) area alone.

'Discipline zone' opens at Maysilo

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

THE ROAD around the Mandaluyong City Hall will be turned into a "discipline zone" starting next month.

Mayor Neptali Gonzales II said they will strictly implement the four-way lane system on Maysilo Circle around the City Hall grounds to ease traffic in the area.

Based on the plan, two outer lanes will assigned to passenger jeeps, while the two inner lanes will be occupied by private cars.

"The road is wide enough to accommodate four lanes. This will be an experimental area," Gonzales added.

There shall also be designated loading and unloading zones, unlike the present set-up where there are no specific divisions on the road, with vehicles swerving left and right, confining the wide road to two- to three-lane traffic.

The city government will deploy additional traffic enforcers in the area as part of the project, Gonzales said.

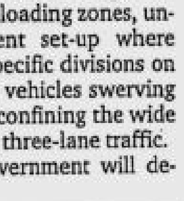
It will also post traffic advisories along Boni Avenue and Martinez Street to guide motorists in the new system.

If the experimental program proves to be efficient, the city government said it could also implement the scheme in other traffic-choked roads like Acacia Lane, Kalentong and Shaw Boulevard.

Abu is next ambassador to Indonesia

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo



MY SPIES in Malacañang say Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Efren Abu will be appointed ambassador to Indonesia when he retires days from now.

Susmaryosep! Wala na bang ibang pagpipilian? Is there no other choice? Abu is retiring in disgrace—that is, in the eyes of most of the AFP's officers corps and rank-and-file members—because his name was linked to at least two recent military scandals: the overpriced renovation of the Camp Aguinaldo sidewalk, and the construction of a military resort in Boracay.

Abu is one of two AFP chiefs who became unpopular because of their perceived (note that the word "perceived" is objective and not judgmental) involvement in scandals. The other unpopular AFP chief when he retired was Gen. Lisandro Abadia who, up to now, is still being hounded by AFP financial scams recently dug up.

* * *

Abu's appointment to the plum diplomatic post is very much welcome for, of course, the future ambassador to Indonesia. But it is a letdown for many young officers and enlisted personnel who are fighting for a graft-free AFP.

I was told the No. 1 consideration for Abu's impending appointment as envoy to the neighboring country is personal: his link to Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono. They were classmates at a US Army school a couple of years ago.

A country's ambassador should be like Caesar's wife, above suspicion. The majority of AFP officers and men think their retiring chief of staff tolerated graft and corruption under his very nose because of the camp sidewalk renovation and the construction of a military vacation house.

In the eyes of idealistic officers and men, such projects were unnecessary because soldiers were dying in the field due to lack of medicines.

* * *

The country where Abu will be representing the Philippines in is not known for incorruptible government officials. It is said that in Indonesia, officials and employees of a government agency undertaking a huge project get 20 percent of the total cost of the project. The 20-percent "for the boys" allocation is given by the contractor. It's legal in Indonesia.

* * *

The libel case filed against this writer by Fouzi Ali Bondagjy, an Arab, continues to hound me. Also being hounded by the libel suit are INQUIRER publisher Isagani Yambot and editor-in-chief Letty Jimenez-Magsanoc.

The three of us are compelled to attend this afternoon's hearing at the Makati Regional Trial Court. I am not complaining since libel is part of the risk that columnists like me have to take.

I wonder why, with all the complaints filed against Bondagjy for alleged illegal recruitment and estafa, the Bureau of Immigration hasn't touched him.

The word is that the Bureau of Internal Revenue is also about to pounce on him for alleged tax evasion by his recruitment/travel agencies. In Saudi Arabia, where he comes from, a foreigner who violates any law is immediately arrested and put to trial.

New president solution to PUP woes?

By Tina G. Santos

SOME professors and employees of the Polytechnic University of the Philippines (PUP) oppose a proposal to have a quarterly rotation of the state university's officer-in-charge.

The proposal came from acting chair Carlito Puno of the Commission on Higher Education (CHEd).

But other members of the PUP community, including students, teachers and employees, claimed the current administration was just using the issue to deflect attention from the university's alarming problems.

Acting president

PUP had been administered by an acting president for several years now.

The current acting president, Dr. Samuel Salvador, who was appointed in 2003, tendered his irrevocable resignation effective June 30, reportedly in protest against Puno's proposal.

Salvador, however, would remain the university's vice president for academic affairs, a position he also held during his term as acting president.

Diversion?

But Joel Escandor, a PUP alumnus and one of the convenors of "Justice for PUP," said, while they did not favor Puno's proposal, "some people identified with Salvador were just using the issue to (divert attention from) more pressing problems."

Unattended

Escandor said problems like crimes on campus, and graft and corruption, were not attended to during Salvador's term.

He added that some quarters who sympathized with Salvador were "just trying to get back at Puno," who reportedly confronted Salvador about the university issues during a recent meeting.

Puno reportedly got hold of a copy of the letter sent to Malacañang by Dindo Emmanuel Bautista, a PUP employee assigned at the cashier's office.

Letter

In his letter, a copy of which was obtained by the INQUIRER, Bautista cited concerns such as the rape of a 14-year-old high school student inside the campus by two professors; the unaccounted proceeds of the Human Rainbow project estimated at P6 million, and the alleged favoritism in the promotion of rank-and-file employees and faculty members.

Escandor claimed the rape was only one of several such incidents.

He said a college student was also raped by a professor at the College of Physical Education and Sports.

Rape cases

In another case, he said a college coed was raped by at least 15 students, allegedly members of a fraternity, as part of her "initiation."

No case had been filed in court and some professors involved were still teaching, Escandor said.

PUP made it to the Guinness Book of World Records last year by forming the world's largest human rainbow to mark its centennial.

Project earnings

Escandor said the university earned some P6 million from the project which was allegedly deposited to the personal account of a school official.

"Every student paid P250 for that project. We also had several sponsors, but where did the money go?" said Renante Ciar, a PUP student and leader of Anakbayan.

Promotions

Many employees, even after several years of service, were still considered casual appointees while some newcomers were promoted, Escandor said.

"Obviously, the administration plays favorites. Only those close to higher-ups get promoted," he added.

Bautista mentioned in his letter to President Macapagal-Arroyo unremitted tuition collections amounting to more or less P1 million at the PUP Mulanay branch; the missing unremitted collections of training modules payment from students amounting to more or less P800,000 at the PUP Open University, "and other undocumented anomalies in the university."

Diana Mond Directo, president of the Central Student Council and student regent of the PUP, said one way to resolve the problems would be to install a legitimate president.

Lack of facilities

Directo said that apart from the alleged scandals, PUP also faced such problems as lack of facilities, including laboratory equipment and computers.

"Most of the facilities we have now are really in a bad state, like the old and dilapidated classrooms, chairs and electric fans. We deserve better facilities to make the school environment more conducive to learning," she said.

Budget

Directo added that she acknowledges the fact that the school has to operate on a limited budget from the national government.

Right direction

"The students understand that. We know that this is the reason the PUP administration had to resort to some income-generating measures, including the Human Rainbow project and the selling of raffle tickets," she said.

Directo said the appointment of a legitimate president would be a step in the right direction.

She disclosed that in 2002, a committee funded with P300,000 was formed to search and screen potential candidates for the PUP presidency.

Three candidates

That time, she said, PUP had three candidates: Dr. Dante Guevarra, vice president for administration; Dr. Zenaida Pia, a regular professor, and Dr. Orlando Molina, reportedly an "outsider" who came from the private sector.

It was learned that the selection of a president did not push through, allegedly due to lack of criteria approved by the Board of Regents.

Complaint

This prompted the three candidates to file a complaint against the board. The case is still pending before the Court of Appeals.

"The board wants the search committee to redo the process, but that would take a while and it means that the school has to spend another P300,000. It's just a waste of time and money, why don't they just choose among the three candidates?" Directo said.

Charges

Salvador denied the allegations against him.

He said appropriate charges had been filed against the suspects in the rape cases.

Proceeds from the Human Rainbow project were used for various programs and the improvement of school facilities, he added.

"All their allegations against my administration were unfounded.

"The issues confronting the university are all being properly addressed," Salvador stressed.

No graft

"I can face anybody squarely [and say] that there was no graft and corruption during my term," he told the INQUIRER over the phone.

"I also want to clarify that I am in favor of Puno's decision to enforce a rotation of officer-in-charge, but not every other three months," Salvador added.

NBI arrests man with fake eviction orders

By Margaux C. Ortiz

THE NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation (NBI) arrested an alleged swindler for using a fake court order to evict several tenants from a contested lot in Antipolo City.

Jovenio Fortuna of V. Luna Street, Quezon City, was nabbed by agents of the NBI Anti-Fraud and Computer Crimes Division (AFCCD) while about to supervise the eviction over the weekend.

AFCCD chief Elfren Meneses said Fortuna used spurious documents allegedly signed by lot owner and complainant Leovigildo Reyes.

The NBI official said the suspect informed the tenants, particularly a certain Zorayda Salvan, that they would be evicted on June 15 under the Special Power of Attorney signed by Reyes.

Fortuna reportedly said the eviction would be supervised by the local Lupong Tagapamayapa of Barangay San Roque, Antipolo City.

The tenants confronted Reyes, who denied signing such documents and who sought the help of the bureau.

When Fortuna presented to the tenants the SPA on the supposed eviction date, a group of NBI agents arrested him on the spot.

Among the fake documents the suspect carried were tax declarations under the name of Reyes, Department of Trade and Industry business registration under Fortuna's name, and a deed of conditional sale allegedly executed between Reyes and a certain Ricardo Cruz Jr. involving the contested property.

The NBI has recommended the prosecution of Fortuna at the Antipolo City Prosecutor's Office for violation of Article 316 or swindling and falsification of public documents.

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Manila honors outstanding artists

By Tina G. Santos

MANILA Mayor Lito Atienza will lead city officials tomorrow in conferring on outstanding artists the Diwa ng Lahi at Patnubay ng Sining at Kalinangan Awards.

The conferment of the awards is part of the celebration of the city's foundation day, the 434th Araw ng Maynila.

"The (award) is meant to give due recognition to Filipino artists who have dedicated their talents and skills to promote their respective fields of artistic endeavor," Atienza said.

This year's Diwa ng Lahi awardee is the world-renowned Bayanihan Folk Dance Company. The Gatpuno Antonio Villegas Award will be conferred on Dr. Cirilo F. Bautista.

The Patnubay ng Sining and Kalinangan Awardees are Jose Pedro C. Recio for architecture, Jerusalino Araos for sculpture, Peque Gallaga for new art forms, Freddie Aguilar for music, Dr. Marjorie Evasco for literature, Eddie Garcia for cinema, Antipas Delotavo Jr. for printing, Fernando Josef for theater, Douglas Nierras for dance, and Jaime Arevalo de Guzman for the Tanging Parangal.

SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

CIVIL LAW (TORTS AND DAMAGES)—Recovery of moral damages —The law on damages prescribes that in order that one can have redress for an act which caused him damage, the act must not only be hurtful, it must also be wrongful. There must be damnum et enjuria. All in all, in order to recover moral damages, the claimant must prove the following: (1) there must be an injury, whether physical, mental or psychological, clearly sustained by the claimant; (2) there must be a culpable act or omission factually established; (3) the wrongful act or omission of the defendant is the proximate cause of the injury sustained by the claimant; and (4) the award of damages is predicated on any of the cases stated in Article 2219 of the Civil Code. The evidence supports respondent Acena's claim for moral damages against petitioner Estolas. The actuations of petitioner Estolas in booting-out respondent Acena as Administrative Officer, which the latter held in a permanent capacity, and in forcing the position of Associate Professor—undisputedly a temporary position—down his throat, fall squarely within Article 21 of the Civil Code on human relations. On the witness stand, respondent Acena testified that as a direct result of petitioner Estolas's actuations, he felt insulted, embarrassed and humiliated. He suffered "serious anxiety, moral shock, sleepness nights" and even had to resort to "minimum tanquilizer." (Citations omitted.) (Justice Chico-Nazario, Second Division, Estolas v. Acena, G.R. NO. 157070, January 14, 2005)

R.B. VERA

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Tuesday, June 21, 2005
12th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Gen 13:2,5-18
Gospel: Matthew 7:6,12-14

Jesus said to his disciples, "Do not give what is holy to the dogs, or throw your pearls to the pigs: they might trample on them and even turn on you and tear you to pieces.

"So, do to others whatever you would that others do to you: there you have the Law and the Prophets.

"Enter through the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many go that way. How narrow is the gate that leads to life and how rough the road; few there are who find it."

Commentary

These are sayings of Jesus, collected for use as wisdom in all sorts of situations. Don't throw your pearls to the pigs—remember the parable of the pearl of great price—once you've found it don't just give it to anyone. Pigs eat anything and one thing is as good as another and it all ends up as fodder and slops and they are violent for very arbitrary reasons and reactions. Be careful! Not everyone is overjoyed that the kingdom of justice for the poor and peace on earth has been found! We are to begin way back at the beginning with the law and the prophets as starting point—and do to others what we'd have others do to us in every circumstance. And enter through the narrow gate—that leads to life. Enter through Jesus' word, through baptism and community, through obedience to Jesus' teachings and sharing our treasure with the poor. There are few who find the road—have we actually found the road to life? Are we on it?

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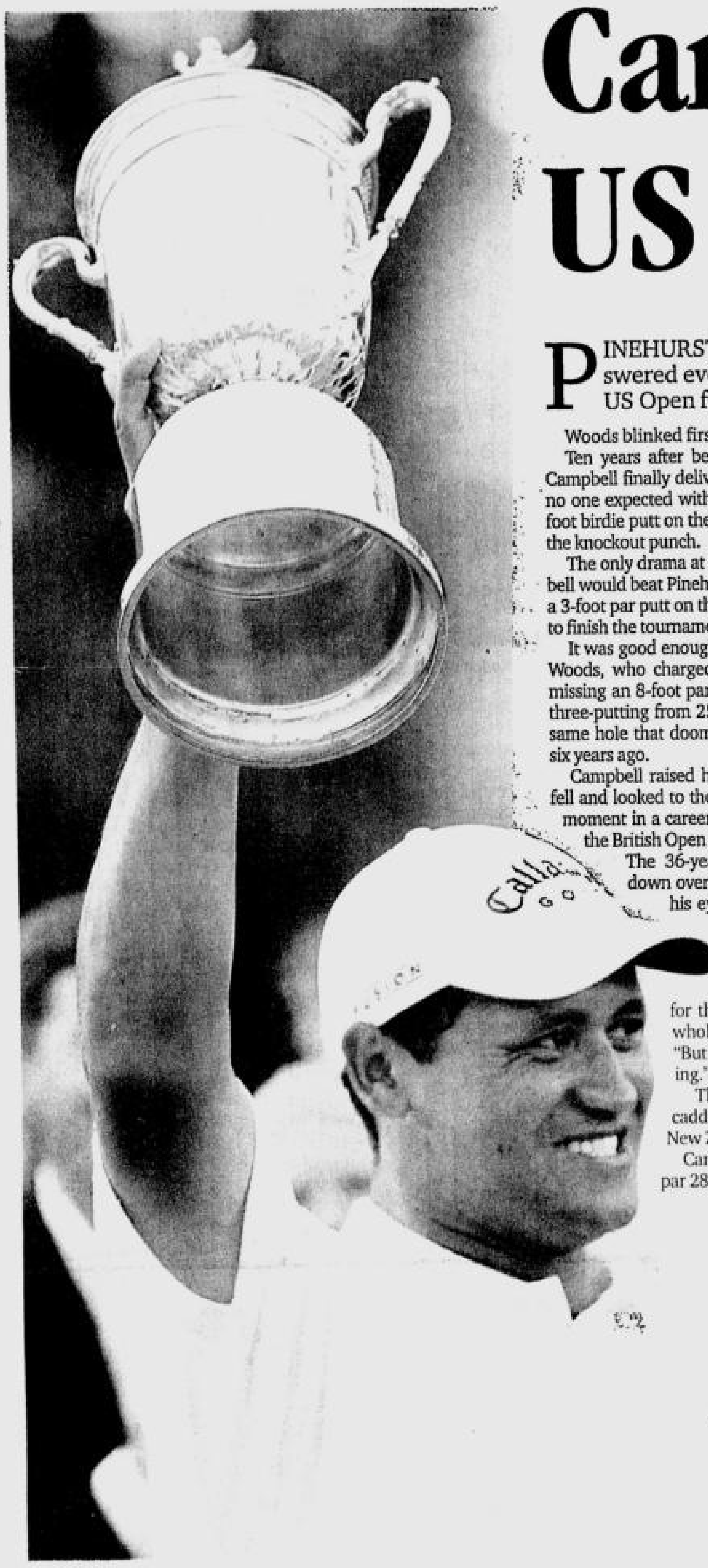
Compiled by L. Mangulat

TENNIS: Wimbledon; 10 a.m. (r) and 7 p.m.; First Round Highlights; 6 p.m.; STAR Sports—Check out first-round action on the grass courts of Wimbledon.

GOLF: LPGA Wegmans Rochester; First Round; 5:30 p.m.; Second Round; midnight; ESPN—Catch the first and second round from Pittsford, New York.

Schedules subject to change without prior notice.

Campbell snatches US Open; Tiger 2nd



PINEHURST, North Carolina—New Zealander Michael Campbell answered every challenge Tiger Woods threw his way on Sunday until a US Open full of surprises got the biggest one of them all.

Woods blinked first.

Ten years after being touted as a rising star, Campbell finally delivered a major championship no one expected with clutch par saves and a 20-foot birdie putt on the 17th hole that proved to be the knockout punch.

The only drama at the end was whether Campbell would beat Pinehurst No. 2 course. He missed a 3-foot par putt on the final hole for a 1-under 69 to finish the tournament at even par.

It was good enough for a two-shot victory over Woods, who charged along the back nine until missing an 8-foot par putt on the 16th hole, then three-putting from 25 feet on the par-3 17th, the same hole that doomed his chances at Pinehurst six years ago.

Campbell raised his arms when the final putt fell and looked to the sky, stunned by a crowning moment in a career that looked so promising in the British Open at St. Andrews 10 years ago.

The 36-year-old Kiwi tugged his cap down over his face and then dabbed at his eyes. After hugs with his caddie and playing partner Olin Browne, Campbell thrust his fist in the air.

"I worked really hard for this, ups and downs from my whole career," Campbell said. "But it's worth the work. It's amazing."

The last hug was for Woods' caddie, Steve Williams, a fellow New Zealander.

Campbell, who finished at even-par 280, became only the second Kiwi to win a major championship after Bob Charles in the 1963 British Open.

Woods stayed behind the 18th green and watched Campbell finish, gently rubbing a clenched fist over his lips as he stared back toward the 17th green, wondering how another US Open at Pinehurst got away from him.

"Unfortunately, it's frustrating," Woods said after a 69, one of the day's only four rounds under par. "If I putt just normal, I'm looking pretty good."

Woods finished at 2-over 282, only the second time he has finished second in a major.

Sergio Garcia (70), Tim Clark (70) and Mark Hensby (74) tied for third at 5-over 285.

There might not have been any tense moments if not for Retief Goosen, the two-time US Open champion who turned in a collapse that ranks among the greatest in major championship history. He lost his three-shot lead in three holes and crashed in spectacular fashion, closing with an 81.

Gil Morgan was the last 54-hole leader at the US Open to fade so unceremoniously, shooting 81 in the final round in 1992 at Pebble Beach.

"I messed up badly," Goosen said. "I obviously threw this away. We all have bad rounds. It's unfortunate it happened in this tournament."

Jason Gore, who had the massive crowd cheering on the 818th-ranked player in the world, shot 84. Browne, who started the final round tied with Gore three shots from the lead, closed with an 80.

That set the stage for a duel between Campbell and Woods, and all along the back nine it appeared it could go either way.

"I was telling myself 20 times a hole [to] keep my focus, keep my focus, keep my focus," Campbell said. "And it worked."

NEW ZEALAND'S Michael Campbell raises his putter after winning the 105th US Open in Pinehurst, North Carolina, and then the silver cup (main picture) after becoming only the second Kiwi to capture a major championship. REUTERS

Campbell hasn't been in contention at a major since the 1995 British Open, where he hit one of the most memorable shots out of the Road Hole bunker to save par and take the lead into the final round. He finished with a 76 at St. Andrews, missing out on the playoff by one shot.

His career has been a roller coaster since. But he

CAMPBELL/ A22

One egg that's not golden for Goose

PINEHURST, North Carolina—Last year, the stoic walk up the final fairway was a victory march for Retief Goosen. This time, the 18th hole felt more like an escape route.

The US Open finally caught up to Goosen on Sunday, turning what was supposed to be a coronation for one of the best players in the game into an out-and-out embarrassment.

"I played rubbish at the end of the day," he said.

For Goosen, "rubbish" can be defined like this: He shot 11-over-par 81. He turned a three-stroke lead into an eight-stroke loss. First place became a tie for 11th. A chance at history morphed into an ugly footnote.

The South African ended the final round not contending for his second straight Open title but merely hoping to win a friendly bet with playing partner Jason Gore, who was equally awful, in the last three holes.

(For the record, Goosen won $5.)

After hitting his final approach, Goosen took off his cap, the formality of a two-putt the only thing standing between him and the end to a long, difficult day.

At Pinehurst, the villain was the course and Goosen's own game—he needed 36 putts. *AP*

La Salle tossers whip Lady Stags

GAMES THURSDAY (*Rizal Coliseum*)
3 p.m.—La Salle vs Santo Tomas
5 p.m.—Ateneo vs San Sebastian

DEFENDING champion La Salle is back in its impressive fighting form, wasting little time to whip San Sebastian College, 25-20, 25-15, 26-16, yesterday in the semifinals of the Shakey's V-League at the Rizal Coliseum.

With flu-stricken first-string setter Reina Ferina Saet slowly regaining her form, the Lady Archers needed just a little over an hour to pull off the victory over the slumping Lady Stags and gain their first win in two matches.

Saet, the league's Best Setter in the two previous conferences, orchestrated 34 excellent sets in a sterling performance that La Salle sorely lacked in its shocking straight-sets loss to Ateneo, 25-19, 15-25, 23-25, 17-25, on Saturday.

"We're recovering step by step," said La Salle coach Ramil de Jesus. "Fortunately, we have time to practice before we meet UST on Thursday."

UST standout Joyce Pano spikes one in off Ateneo's Maria Theresa Iratay and Michelle Laborte (right). RYAN LIM

Maureen Penetrante and Michelle Carolino again dished out excellent performances, drilling holes on San Sebastian's defensive wall with 14 and 12 points, respectively.

In the second game, Santo Tomas needed an extra set to tame in-form Ateneo, 25-22, 25-17, 20-25, 25-23, for its second straight win.

Roxanne Pimentel and Mary Jean Balse topscored for the Tigresses with 19 and 15 points, respectively.

Cherry Rose Macatangay shone for the Lady Stags with a game-high 16 markers but could not single-handedly lift San Sebastian, second to La Salle after the eliminations, from the pits.

The rest of the Lady Stags combined for just 20 points as the squad absorbed their second setback in the double-round semifinal phase of the tournament backed by Accel, Mikasa, IBC 13 and Jemah Television. *Karla Tricia V. Magno*

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Coach Uichico still mum on status of ace Seigle

By June Navarro

JONG Uichico knows the wisdom of keeping a secret and revealing it at the right time.

The San Miguel Beer coach has kept Red Bull Barako guessing whether Danny Seigle, the league's leading local scorer, will finally see action in the Gran Matador-PBA Fiesta Conference semifinals tomorrow.

"He's (Seigle) on a day-to-day basis," said Uichico after the Beermen took the best-of-five opener with a come-from-behind 89-81 victory Sunday.

Seigle, who averaged a league-high 23.5 points per game among locals, injured his right ankle on May 18 and has missed the Beermen's last four games.

"We might allow him to play or we might not," said Uichico, finishing the statement with a mischievous grin.

Uichico admitted though that the 6-foot-6 Seigle has been joining the Beermen's practice sessions.

"He'll surely be needed against Red Bull," said Uichico.

But even with Seigle around, the Beermen vowed not to fall into complacency against a team which weathered a couple of make-or-break games en route to the semifinals.

The Barako sent defending champion Barangay Ginebra to an early vacation in the wild-card phase before beating FedEx in the quarterfinals.

Emerging second after the elimination round, San Miguel Beer automatically booked a semifinal seat and got a three-week layoff.

Torres captures long jump gold; Dagmil shines

MARESTELLA Torres bagged the gold in the women's long jump while Henry Dagmil earned a silver Saturday as the Philippines made its presence felt in the first leg of the Asian Grand Prix in Surabaya, Indonesia.

Torres, 24, cleared 6.46 meters in the winning jump that earned her $2,500. A Chinese entry was second (6.28) and an Uzbekistan bet was third (6.27).

Dagmil, 20, settled for the runner-up prize of $700 with a 7.65-m jump. An Indian athlete captured the gold with a 7.89-m jump.

Lerma Gabito-Bulauitan failed to make an impression in the long jump due to an injury, while John Lozada finished sixth in the 800 m.

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Aguilar sweeps Talisay Camel moto

TALISAY CITY—Glen Aguilar finished the Western Visayas swing of the Camel Supercross International Championships Series 2005 the same way he started it—with a bang.

Riding almost flawlessly in his 2004 Honda CRF, Aguilar dominated the field of seven riders to rule the centerpiece Camel Pro 125 international race and emerge as the winningest rider in the one-day event organized by the National Motorcyle Sports and Safety Association (Namssa) in cooperation with Camel.

Aguilar, dubbed as the "Revtex Rocket," outdueled multititled Jovie Saulog and Thai rider Chaiyan Romphan in the morning race and duplicated the feat against Kenneth San Andres and Popeye Rubi in the afternoon to complete a sweep of the Camel races in the Visayas.

The 31-year-old Aguilar regaled the huge Father's Day crowd at the muddy Talisay Stadium track with gravity-defying jumps.

"I'm really determined to win again so as not to disappoint the large crowd here in Talisay who have supported me ever since," said Aguilar, who also swept the previous two races in Iloilo City last month.

Aguilar competes against Asia's best riders in the third leg of the 2005-FIM-Asian Motocross Championships in Macau next weekend.

Unlike in the Camel leg in Iloilo when Aguilar was challenged by foreign riders James Robinson of New Zealand and Tadakazu Otsuka of Japan, the Talisay leg turned out to be a breeze for the Filipino champion.

Romphan, the third highest-ranked rider in Thailand, took several spills in the morning and afternoon Camel races. He finished third in the morning races and fourth in the afternoon.

Ricky Orcajada defeated Ramil Morales, Francis Gutierrez, Kirt Soberano and Rey-Al Jarlego to rule the Honda XRM category.

The other winners: San Andres (expert open production), Kenneth Belleza (novice open production), Sam Torre (novice 125 production), Dennis Acdol (beginners open production), Dexter Bacabac (veterans and executive), Michael Desbaro (enduro and pantra) and Jed Luna (novice enduro).

Debuting Mandaue five repulses Valencia

MANDAUE City—Backed by Hapee-Dewfoam, Mantawi's Sparkling Nights struck hard in overtime to turn back Valencia Golden Harvest, 82-79, Sunday in their debut in the 2005 Panasonic-NBC national basketball championship at the Cultural and Sports Center here.

Ardy Larong and Ronald Capati ignited a 6-2 run in the extra period, but it was Aries Gloria who sealed the victory with a triple in the dying seconds.

The setback was the second straight and fourth in six games for Mayor Jose Galario Jr.'s Golden Harvest in the tournament.

The Sparkling Nights has BAP president Joey Lina as special guest.

Valencia battles the Iloilo Warriors at 6 p.m. tomorrow at the University of San Agustin gym.

The Zanorte Hornbills will start their northern swing against the Parañaque Jets, also at 6 p.m., at the San Dionisio gym in Parañaque.

Briton rules Race 6 as Sy, Mikola crash

ZHUHAI winner James Winslow (center) flanked by John O'Hara and Rodolfo Avila

GUANGDONG, China—He didn't come all the way from Britain to lose.

RACE 6 RESULTS
Asian Formula Three Series
1. James Winslow (Britain) 19:27.440
2. John O'Hara (Ireland) 19:27.747
3. Rodolfo Avila (Macau) 19:30.278
4. Tyson Sy (Philippines) 19:30.278
5. Dado Pena (RP) 19:42.595

Delivering on a promise, Briton James Winslow pounced on a crash involving series leader Ananda Mikola and Tyson Sy to rule Round 6 Sunday of the Asian Formula 3 Grand Prix at the jam-packed Zhuhai International Circuit here.

Winslow, the Northampton-born veteran of many British F3 races, was third behind Mikola and Sy going into the eighth lap when the Indonesian under-steered his car, rammed the Filipino young gun's tires.

While Mikola and Sy's cars spun out, Winslow grabbed the lead and towed teammate John O'Hara all the way to the finish for a 1-2 Shell Helix Kinetic PCSO finish.

Sy managed to rejoin the race and eventually finished fourth behind Christian Jones Motorsport's Rodolfo Avila of Macau.

Another Filipino, Dado Peña, of Ambi Pur Team Goddard-Minardi Team Asia, also started from the back of the grid then worked his way up to finish fifth.

Race enthusiasts can log on to www.asianf3.net for more details.

Winslow, a two-time Formula Ford champ, finished the 12-lap race at the 4.3-km track in 19 minutes 27.440 seconds.

O'Hara, who started all the way from the back of the field, finished 0.307 second behind Mikola in 19:27.747 while setting the day's fastest lap time of 1:35.505 in the fourth.

Winslow kept third place overall with 55 points as he pulled away from Filipino 2003 AF3 champion Pepon Marave of Shell Helix Kinetic PCSO, who dropped to fifth after a sixth-place finish (20:01.891). O'Hara was fourth with 47.

The 17-year-old Sy, lead driver of Speedtech Asia who finished third in Race 5 on Saturday, appeared all set to score his breakthrough win in the series when he overtook Winslow for second place in the third lap and then momentarily grabbed the pole from Mikola in the seventh lap.

Mikola, who remained on top of the heap with 95 points, 33 ahead of Christian Jones of Australia, was eventually fined $500 for aggressive driving.

Sy, a Grade 11 student of Inter Asia School, remained in seventh overall with 36 points behind Peña.

Shell Kinetic Helix PCSO had a twin kill when its Irish driver, Lee Farrell, won the Promotions Class in 20:15.372.

Soeprapto Moreno was second in 20:17.435, followed by Japan's Hideaki Machida in 20:14.935. Soeprapto was also fined $500 and penalized 10 points for ramming Irish Greg Murphy from behind.

NCAA opens Saturday; PCU tests San Beda

By Jasmine W. Payo

PHILIPPINE Christian University coach Junel Baculi is already feeling the pressure.

"Even if I've been coaching for a long time now, I feel like I'm a rookie," said the multititled mentor, who will debut in the collegiate ranks when the 81st NCAA season unfolds this Saturday.

Baculi, who has won seven titles in the PBL, will try to steer the Dolphins to their second straight championship. The task, though, appears more daunting since he replaced Ato Tolentino, who turned the Dolphins from cellar-dwellers to champions in one season.

Still, Baculi remains confident the Dolphins will continue to come out strong.

"The team is intact," said Baculi during the NCAA press conference yesterday at the ABS-CBN compound. "We're out to prove that last year's victory was no fluke."

Gabby Espinas, who made league history by winning the 2004 Most Valuable Player and Rookie of the Year awards, will lead the Dolphins' campaign against the San Beda Lions in the 2 p.m. opener.

Coach Nash Racela believes that their recent PBL stint has toughened his Lions.

"The maturity of the players is there," said Racela, who led San Beda last season to its first Final Four appearance since 1997. "My assessment is I have four or five players who are better now after the PBL."

Letran will be missing the services of ace gunner Ronjay Enrile, while league top scorer Noy Javier had already used up his eligibility for last year's runner-up Perpetual Help.

San Sebastian College will take on Mapua at 6 p.m., while Jose Rizal University and College of St. Benilde collide in the 8 p.m. nightcap of the four-game inaugural bill.

Campbell snatches US Open; Woods 2nd

From page A21

showed the poise of a champion at Pinehurst, even with roars ripping through the pines.

Woods, eight shots behind as he headed up the third fairway, had the look of a winner when he birdied the first two holes on the back nine to get within two shots of the lead.

Campbell answered with a 25-foot birdie on No. 12.

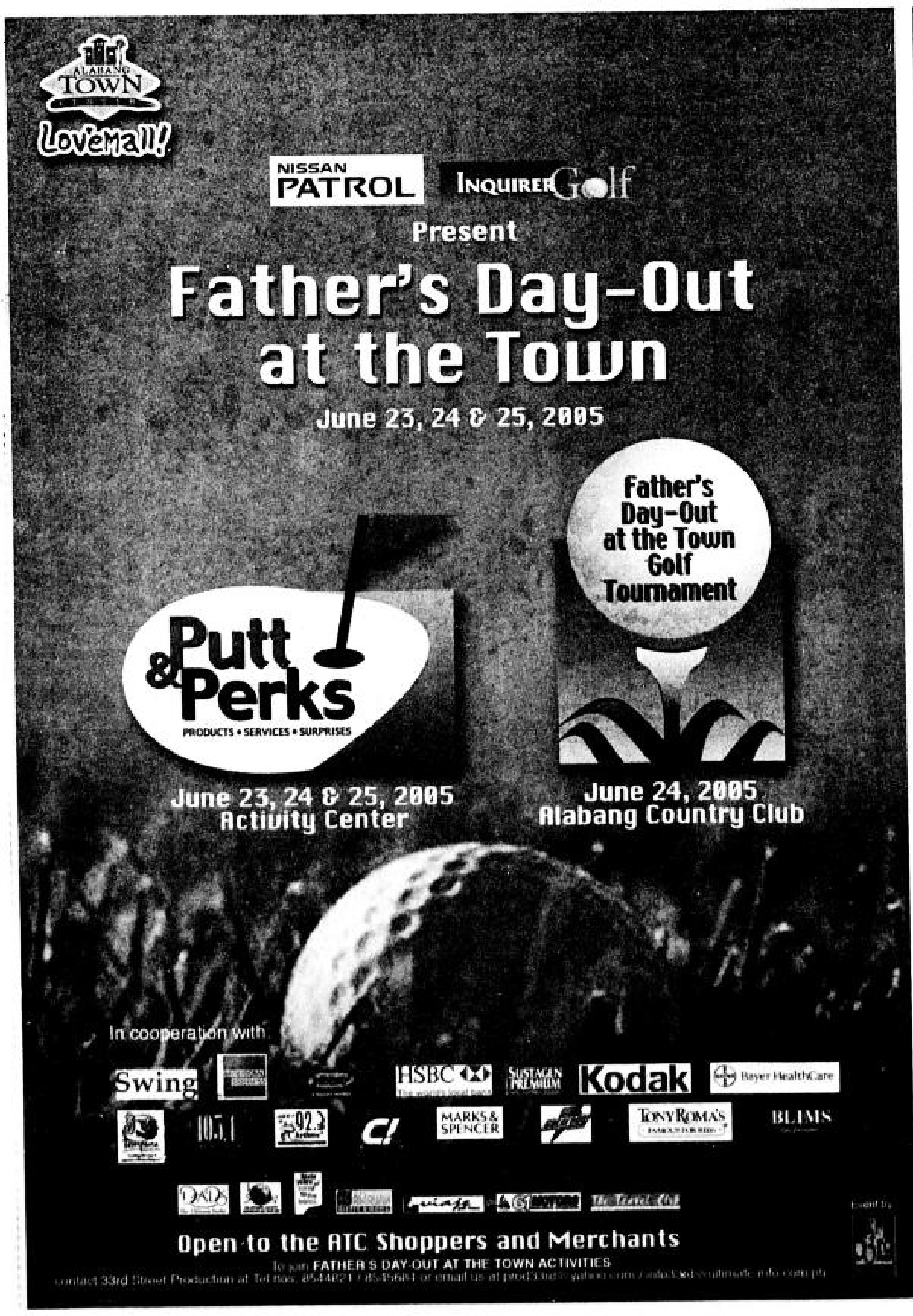
Woods stuffed his approach on the 203-yard 15th hole to 5 feet, and the cheer was such a jolt that Campbell backed off his shot on the 14th fairway. He hit that one to 8 feet and made par. The tournament effectively ended on the next two holes.

Campbell hit short and into the bunker on the 15th, but hit a terrific shot out to 6 feet to save par. Up ahead, Woods chipped weakly to 8 feet and the par putt grazed the right side of the lip. Needing a birdie, Woods had to attack the hole with his 25-foot putt on the 17th, and it trickled 6 feet by. He missed that for another bogey.

Woods ended with a 12-foot birdie, but even he knew it was too late.

Campbell earned $1.17 million for his first victory in the United States, which comes with five-year exemptions on the US PGA Tour and the other three majors.

"Hats off to him," Woods said. "He was in the doldrums and worked his way back." *AP*



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Tiger's good, but Campbell's better

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

HE WAS not the winner but with the way he finished, Tiger Woods made himself the darling yet of the crowd for the umpteenth time.

The scene was familiar: Tiger Woods looking every inch the man set to win it for the third time.

The leader had been waylaid.

"I got lost in another course and was bitten," said South Africa's Retief Goosen, the leader by three shots going to the last round. "I bled to death. My putting couldn't save me."

He was the only one not hurting at Pinehurst 2 of North Carolina the first three days while perched atop the leader board of the 105th US Open. In the end, it was he who was hurt the most. The two-time champion skied to a final-day 81 and finished not even among the Top 5.

The gallery, the most fickle-minded in all sports, deserted him early, switching back to their idol of old: Tiger Woods.

Even though Tiger Woods was six shots off Goosen at the start of play, and even when he went 5-over early on, the crowd, like grizzled stocks players, went to the blue chips.

They went to Tiger Woods once more, applauding his shot after shot.

They were rewarded as Tiger Woods inched his way once more into serious contention for the second major of the year.

But when it seemed like another Tiger Woods rally was ready to materialize, the gods of golf inexplicably had a change of heart.

Suddenly, somebody had revised the script.

No, this wasn't what used to be.

Horribly, Tiger Woods found himself mouthing different lines.

Uncharacteristically, the all-too-famous path to fantasyland turned hellish.

While Tiger Woods appeared to have repositioned himself for the drama only he has been able to produce all these years, he fumbled quite astonishingly in the end.

The climax had become entirely different. The hero got killed.

He was putting birdie on 17 and, like in his previous rallies, Tiger Woods was expected to make birdie. He would make bogey instead. Three putts. From 25 feet.

When he did finally make birdie on the final hole, that was of no consequence anymore as it was practically over but, well, the shouting.

He was three down by the time he stepped off the final green. Even if Michael Campbell had made double bogey instead of bogey on the 72nd hole, Campbell would have still emerged the winner.

Certainly, Tiger Woods had run out of holes, making Campbell the first from New Zealand to win the US Open and the second New Zealander to win a major after Bob Charles in the 1963 British Open.

The final-round 69 for Tiger Woods was his best in four days, but it wasn't good enough to win it even amid soaring scores, such as the 14-over-par 84 of Jason Gore, Goosen's partner in the championship flight.

But Tiger Woods, the 2005 Masters champion, finishing second was a good enough finish, considering he had practically been counted out of the race with still many contestable holes left to play.

In fact, when told that Tiger Woods birdied 18, Michael Campbell replied, "He is good."

But if Tiger Woods was good, Michael Campbell, 36, whose Scottish grandfather married a Maori, was simply better. He was because, to put it mildly, worked hard for it.

"It's unbelievable," said Campbell, who got cut the last four of his first six US Opens. "I worked hard for it, I deserve it, and it's all mine."

He was ranked 88th before his victory yesterday, and was a qualifier at that, although he has been a 12-year pro, a winner of six European Tour legs and had led the 1995 British Open after 54 holes.

With his check of $1.7 million, Campbell; born in the shadow of Mt. Taranaki in Hawera, New Zealand, joins the exclusive millionaires club reserved for winners of the majors.

"I almost quit," said Campbell, who has houses in Wellington, New Zealand, and Brighton, England. "I can't believe I'm holding this trophy now."

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Horry 3-pointer lifts Spurs closer to third NBA crown

DETROIT'S Ben Wallace (left) shoots past San Antonio's Robert Horry in Game 5. The Spurs won to take a 3-2 lead. REUTERS

DETROIT, Michigan—Robert Horry nailed a three-point dagger with 5.9 seconds left as San Antonio beat Detroit 96-95 in overtime in game five of the National Basketball Association finals, putting the Spurs on the path to their third title since 1999.

The Spurs also placed the defending champion Pistons on the brink of elimination and can wrap up their second title in three years with a win in game six on Tuesday in San Antonio.

"I just had that feeling, had that energy like this is a good game," Horry said. "I've been shooting pretty good so I let it fly. In the crunch I am out there with a smile on my face."

Horry hit five three pointers on Sunday and his 21 points matched a career game high in the finals that he scored for Houston in game four of the 1995 NBA title series.

After a scoreless first half, Horry rallied to score 18 points in the fourth quarter. The Spurs were down 95-93 during a timeout with nine seconds left in the contest before Horry iced the victory.

Following a timeout the ball went to Manu Ginobili who dished it right back to a wide open Horry for the long bomb.

"Unbelievable. That was probably the greatest performance I've ever been part of," Spurs star Tim Duncan said. "To see him as calm as he was and doing whatever.

"It's Bobby Horry. He does whatever he wants. He is Big Shot Bob."

Reeling from two straight road losses and fearing another playoff collapse, the Spurs had been accused of being too soft and timid in the first two games in Detroit.

But forward Bruce Bowen and guard Ginobili gave San Antonio some needed toughness on Sunday.

Ginobili, held to 19 points in first two games in Detroit, scored seven in the first quarter and finished with 15 on Sunday. Bowen had 10 points and four fouls while Ginobili had nine assists and four fouls.

"The players were great about supporting each other," Spurs coach Gregg Popovich said.

This was the first close game following four blowouts by the home teams. After winning the first two games by a combined 36 points, the Spurs had have done little right since touching down in Detroit.

Spurs supporters were wondering if they were headed for a similar collapse to the one they endured last season at the hands of the Los Angeles Lakers when they blew a 2-0 lead in the semi-finals.

Duncan had 26 points and 19 rebounds in game five but he struggled from the free throw line down the stretch, missing six straight in the fourth quarter.

But he made one with 33 seconds left to tie it 89-89 and that's the way it ended in regulation.

Duncan then missed an easy tip-in with less than a second left that would have sealed the win for San Antonio in regulation.

"Absolute nightmare," Duncan said. "It all compounded in the fourth quarter. I had a chance it didn't go down. The guys were impressive. Tony Parker, Manu continuing to attack and of course, Bobby."

It was left to Horry, not two-time league MVP Duncan, to provide the heroics, making the winning shot but also taking off for a Jordanesque-style slam dunk in overtime to pull the Spurs within two points, 95-93. *AFP*

HORRY scores game-winner. AP

SPALDING
2005 NBA FINALS

96	GAME 5	95
3	STANDING	2

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Mass withdrawals taint Schumacher's F1 win

INDIANAPOLIS, Indiana—Ferrari's Michael Schumacher emerged with the victory in a US Grand Prix that fell little short of farce on Sunday after the withdrawal of 14 Formula One cars running on suspect Michelin tires left only six cars in the race.

All seven of the teams supplied by Michelin formed up on the grid, but were back in the pits at the end of the warm-up lap leaving Ferrari, Minardi and Jordan, all on Bridgestone tyres, to race.

As big-screen televisions showed the drivers climbing out of their cars, boos rang out from the crowd of more than 100,000 at the famed Indianapolis Motor Speedway and angry fans threw things at the track.

"It was mainly bottles, maybe some beer," Schumacher said.

More jeers greeted the award ceremony, where Ferrari topped the podium for the first time this year after Schumacher's 1.5-second victory over teammate Rubens Barrichello of Brazil and Jordan's Tiago Monteiro. Monteiro finished a lap back to become the first Portuguese driver to post a podium finish in Formula One.

"It's not the right way to win my first one this year," admitted Schumacher, Germany's seven-time world champion who has now won four of the six US Grands Prix staged at Indianapolis.

Schumacher jumped to third in the standings, with 34 points to the 59 of Fernando Alonso and 37 of Kimi Raikkonen. AFP

Birdie binge gives Ochoa title; Delasin 7th

PITTSFORD, New York—Mexico's Lorena Ochoa birdied six of her final seven holes to turn a five-shot deficit into a four-stroke victory at the $1.5 million LPGA Wegmans Rochester event.

Ochoa entered the final round two shots back of 18-year-old American Paula Creamer, but fired a seven-under-par 65 for a 72-hole total of 15-under 273.

Fil-Am Dorothy Delasin wound up joint seventh after her second straight 70 and a 283 aggregate, 3 shots better than Filipina Jennifer Rosales' 71=285. Delasin bagged $37,536 (about P2.1M) while Rosales, a Smart endorser, earned $19,978 (about P1.1M)

The 23-year-old Ochoa had three runner-up finishes and six top-10s in 10 events this year.

But she finally got into the win column on Sunday, earning the $225,000 in prize money.

"It's hard to realize right now," Ochoa said. "I just knew I really wanted to win this tournament. I got out there and even though I was behind and I was losing I keep telling myself 'you're going to win, you're going to win this. Just be patient and things are going to come your way now.'"

"There's not much you can do when Lorena birdied six out of seven holes," Creamer said. "It's pretty amazing. I tried to get some momentum going on there. That was probably the best golf she's played all year so far and it was the best golf I've seen so far."

Trailing Creamer, her playing partner, by five shots after 11 holes, Ochoa birdied 12, using an approach shot that dropped within 10 feet, while Creamer settled for bogey after driving into the woods.

"I think the key was that I took advantage of Paula's mistake on number 12," Ochoa said. "She went to the woods, punched out, and I put it really close. That was two-strokes difference and from there I said, 'Let's win this tournament.'"

Ochoa parred 17 while Creamer missed a 10-footer for par, then Ochoa capped the comeback with a long birdie putt on 18 as Creamer bogeyed.

"She just went birdie, birdie, birdie, birdie. It was a train," Creamer said. "It just kept going through. Made no stops, just kept going. If I was going to get beat that's the way I wanted to get beat. Just someone who lit it up." *AFP*

SPORTSWATCH

So clinches 3rd gold medal in Thailand

SO

FIDE Master Wesley So completed a hat trick Sunday in the 6th Asean Age-Group Chess Championships at the Hotel Jomtien in Pattaya, Thailand. So scored 6.0 points in seven rounds to grab the gold medal in the rapid event and underline his dominance in the boys' under-12 division. The country's youngest ever chess master earlier ruled the standard and blitz events with a pair of 8.0s in nine games. Julius Joseph De Ramos and Jan Emmanuel Garcia also reasserted their supremacy in fast games by topping the rapid events of their respective brackets. De Ramos finished with 6.0 points in seven rounds to rule the boys' under-18 while Garcia went perfect in seven games to capture the gold in the boys' under-10. The two also won the gold in blitz Thursday. The Philippine delegation headed by Tagaytay City Mayor Bambol Tolentino is set to arrive yesterday afternoon.

Tagaytay City rules nat'l team chessfest

TAGAYTAY City drew another fine performance from Allan Macala to sweep Tacloban City A in their two-game titular showdown Sunday in the National Open Chess Team Championship at the St. Michael Gym in Iligan City. Macala beat Lyndon Dacuyan twice to lead his team to a pair of 2.5-1.5 victories. Grandmaster Joey Antonio also shone in Game 1 by downing National Master Rodolfo Diaz Jr. on the top board. Other Game 2 matches ended in draws. The win earned the team bankrolled by Tagaytay City Mayor Bambol Tolentino the P100,000 top purse. Sum-Ag NHS finished third after edging Davao City in a separate two-game series. Game 1 ended in a 2-all count before Sum-Ag escaped with a 2-5-1.5 decision in Game 2. Tagaytay's dominance was enhanced by the gold medal efforts of Antonio and Edmundo Gatus on Boards 1 and 3. Jhonell Balquin of Misamis Oriental, Peter Tidoy of Davao and Roberto Biron of Grupo Agraryo topped Boards 2, 4 and 5, respectively.

NCA Super Special 6- Cock Derby June 23

THE NATIONAL Cockers Association (NCA) will stage the "Super Special 6-Cock Derby" on Thursday at the Araneta Coliseum. Four groups of big-time cockers have joined hands to make this event possible. Bannering the Team Sagupaan GCAP is *sabong* idol Patrick Antonio and his partners Pol Estrellado, Benjie Lim, Reps. Butchay and Jerome Paras, Rey Briones and Tony Lasala. Dicky Lim and Boy de Roca will lead the San Juan Coliseum group which field five entries under the names RQP San Juan and Golden Circle. NCA president Ito Ynares heads the Binangonan Balbina Group that include former ambassador Danding Cojuangco, Richard Bates and Rep. Claude Bautista while Georgie Antonio's Firefly Group will have NCA secretary general Jun Santiago, Rep. Ronnie Puno, Boy Jiao, Rene Medina and Ric de Guzman. Meanwhile, Matt Bitanga of Pangasinan emerged solo champion in 2005 the World Slasher Cup Saturday night after his entry, MJ Happy Birthday Golden Circle finished with 7.5 points. Rey Briones and Rep. Butch Pichay (Gold Spartans) was runner-up finisher with seven points.

Cash Premyo begins with 57 fights today

COCKFIGHTING returns at the Roligon Mega Cockpit today as the "Cash Premyo 3-Cock Derby" sizzles at 7 p.m. featuring 57 fights. Guaranteed prize is P200,000 for an entry fee of P4,400. The first and second fastest win champions will get P20,000 and P10,000, respectively. Heading the entries are Darwin Torres of Bulacan, Henry Tan of Quezon province, Mauro Prieto of Palawan, Dado Mitra of Batangas, Ruther Batulgas, Mike Buendia of Batangas, Terry Santos, Ed de Guzman, Ramil Ozar, Largahan champion Col Catlis and Freco Reyes. Call 833-2275, 833-1638 and 852-9812 for details. Reservation of cockhouses is also ongoing for the "Hatawan Sa Tag-ulan 6-Cock Derby" on July 4, 6, 8, 11 and 13. This year's "Hatawan," to be hosted by Roligon owner Rolly Ligon, stakes P3 million in guaranteed prizes, plus a five-door Pajero for the fastest win champion.

Wimby action begins

LONDON—Play got under way as scheduled just after 1100 GMT on the opening day of the 119th Wimbledon championships despite heavy rain and thunder earlier in the day.

Play on the show courts begins at 1200 GMT with men's champion Roger Federer of Switzerland starting the defense of his title against Frenchman Paul-Henri Mathieu on Centre Court.

The weather is expected to brighten over the rest of the day with plenty of sunshine forecast for Tuesday.

Meanwhile, defending women's champion Maria Sharapova is taking steps to ensure a glittering performance at this year's tournament.

The young Russian said Sunday she'll wear shoes with 18-karat gold specks on the sides.

"It shines unbelievably," Sharapova said. "Hopefully it can distract my opponents a little bit."

Sharapova said she has 10 pairs of the gold-speckled shoes, which she estimated are worth at least $600 each. She can well afford the extravagance, because she's expected to pull in more than $20 million this year from endorsements, prize money and other sources. *AP*

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‘Right To Royalty,’ a battle cry

By Pocholo Concepcion
Contributor

IF YOU can't lick 'em, ignore 'em.

That's the message MTV wants to spread across the great digital piracy divide, as it teams up with VH1 and HP in presenting “Right To Royalty”—a concert that seeks to redirect the prevalent consumer mind-set of stealing music.

It's a pretty tough battle, so the organizers want to approach the issue positively. First, they will turn on the crowd with a lineup of performers whose musical styles cut across different tastes and generations.

As of this writing, 17 acts have signed up, even as MTV Philippines VP and managing director Jack Madrid announced: “We hope to get several more on the bill.” Which now includes (in alphabetical order) Apo Hiking Society, Barbie Almalbis, Cynthia Alexander, Geneva, Grace Nono, Jay-R, Joey Ayala, Makiling Ensemble, Mark Bautista, Nina, Noel Cabangon, Paolo Santos, Pinikpikan, Radha, Sarah Geronimo, Seven Shots of Wisdom, Side A and True Faith.

Purists, particularly the hordes that come in droves in “summer slam” gigs, may balk at this lineup. This brings us to the second positive approach: rare production numbers and unique artistic collaborations. MTV's creativity is on the line here, so we trust they don't mean “rare” as in the stuff we see on weekend TV variety shows.

FIGHTING PIRACY (from left) Pinikpikan, Side A, Apo Hiking Society, Seven Shots of Wisdom, Cynthia Alexander and True Faith

> Piracy makes losers out of talented musicians who could snag major deals but go independent for fear of being burned out in cyberspace.

“Right To Royalty” is a concert for a cause. But as the third positive approach puts it: “We're not out to fight a person, a virus, or a movement. Rather . . . we're here to show the world why royalty—in all its different forms—should be respected and celebrated.

The involvement of VH1 makes it more interesting, so expect the concert to expand into a future in-depth music special on the airwaves.

The issue of musicians losing royalty money from music piracy is quite complex. For one, it's virtually impossible to stop what digital technology has made available—CD burning and file sharing. We're not even talking of buying bootleg CDs on the streets here, but we asked two VJs what they think of it:

VJ Don says that while international music piracy has practically dissolved intellectual property rights, people might as well realize that having free music these days can be quite a hassle because there's so much traffic in free downloading sites like Kazaa. “Plus the fact that pirated CDs suffer from quality degradation,” he adds. “It's like seeing the difference between paper from an original computer printout and a badly photocopied one.”

VJ Maike believes music piracy is getting out of hand, so that it makes losers out of upcoming but talented musicians who could have major record deals, but choose to go independent for fear of being burned out in cyberspace.

In any case, it's the consumer's conscience and respect for artistic privilege that “Right To Royalty” seeks to address, because in the end, too much of a good thing cannot last. To illustrate, Napster, the original free-music downloading site, now charges a minimal fee per song.

Of course it would help if fans could have jobs that will allow them to buy all the music they want.

(“Right To Royalty” is set July 29. For free tickets, you have until June 30 to purchase one original Hewlett-Packard ink cartridge from any authorized retailer or dealer, then bring your specially marked carton with your receipt to the redemption center. Or call MTV, 889-9251.)

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June 25, Saturday, 1pm
SOUTH BORDER CONCERT - INDEPENDENT
June 24, Friday, 8pm
June 26, Sun. 2005 PBA FIESTA CONFERENCE
4:15pm Red Bull vs San Miguel / 6:35pm Shell vs Talk N Text

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Cinemalaya indie festival opens July 12

IF YOU love movies and think it's important to support and develop new filmmakers, do go out of your way to patronize the Cinemalaya Independent Film Festival at the CCP, starting July 12.

Screenings of festival entries by new filmmakers in the short narrative and full-length categories will begin on July 13 at the CCP Little Theater:

10 a.m., "Ang Pagdadalaga ni Maximo Oliveros" by **Michiko Yamamoto** and **Aureaus Solito d/w "Alimuom" by Rommel Tolentino.** 1:30 p.m., "Baryoke" by **Ron Bryant** d/w "Babae" by **Sigrid Bernardo.**

4 p.m., "Big Time" by **Mario Cornejo** and **Coreen Jimenez** d/w "Blood Bank" by **Pam Miras.** 6:30 p.m., "ICU Bed No. 7" by **Rica Arevalo** d/w "Kultado" by **Lawrence Fajardo.** 9 p.m., "Isnatchers" by **Michael Dagñalan and Miguel Pancho** d/w "Mansyon" by **Joel Ruiz.**

July 14: 10 a.m., "Lasponggols" by **Sigfreid Santos Sanchez** d/w "Panaginipan" by **Anna Matutina.** 1:30 p.m., "Pepot Artista" by **Clodualdo del Mundo, Jr.** d/w "Mansyon." 4 p.m., "Room Boy" by **Alfred Adlawan** d/w "Babae."

6:30 p.m., "Sarong Banggi" by **Emman dela Cruz** d/w "Blood Bank." 9 p.m., "Maximo Oliveros" d/w "Kultado."

There will be repeat screenings until July 17, culminating in the awards and ceremonies at 7 p.m. that day, plus screenings at the CCP Experimental Theater. In addition, there will be non-competition screenings of other indie productions at the Dream Theater. And an Independent Film Congress will be held on July 15 and 16. Call 832-1125, local 1704.

Cinemalaya is the pioneering product of the visionary efforts of the Film Development Council of the Philippines, the Cultural Center of the Philippines, and the UP Film Institute. But these organizations' hard work will be for naught if film lovers don't support the festival, and participate in its different activities. So, do clear your schedule for this landmark event.

Let's get to know the six filmmakers whose works made it as finalists in the festival's short narrative category:

Lawrence Fajardo ("Kultado") took up AB Mass Communication at the University of St. La Salle, Bacolod City. He has worked on TV productions like "Tiempos Muertos," "Divina" and "Hangkat sa Unos."

"Kultado" is set in a chaotic marketplace in a small province. A young vegetable vendor seeks vengeance against a meat vendor who is the leader of a gang of butchers collecting protection money from other vendors.

Joel Ruiz ("Mansyon") runs a production shop that does features and commercial works. Some of his short films have won awards.

In "Mansyon," Dolores, a housemaid, and her husband Ambo, a gardener, are hired to take care of a large house while its owners are away on a long vacation. Weeks of tedium go by until a small accident sparks a series of discoveries within the once servile couple.

Milo Tolentino ("Alimuom") is a photographer, multi-media artist and fitness trainer. His film is about a killer, and a dead man who refuses to stay dead!

Pamela Miras ("Blood Bank") is a UP film graduate and TV worker whose previous films have won awards. Her film is about a woman suffering from aplastic anemia, who receives weekly blood transfusions, and the troubled medical technician who gives them to her.

Anna Matutina ("Panaginipan") is an editor for television and digital films whose works have been screened abroad. Her film is about two deeply troubled and suicidal women.

And **Sigrid Bernardo**'s film, "Babae," is about the different decleusions of gender, the many ways of "being" a woman.

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

Justin Long

AFTER co-starring with **Ben Stiller** in "Dodgeball," **Justin Long** now plays Keven, the streetsavvy mechanic who revs the VW Herbie back up, in Walt Disney's "Herbie: Fully Loaded."

For her part, **Lindsay Lohan** portrays Maggie, whose adventures with Herbie escalate when they wind up at the garage where Kevin works. It is Kevin who patches Herbie up and transforms him into a sassy street racer—winning both Maggie and Herbie's affections along the way.

Beast and Belle have a ball

From page A28

doubtedly conserving her energy because she was performing again for the Friday evening show, which was just hours away.

"This is a wonderful opportunity," KC told INQUIRER Entertainment. "I am glad that I have the chance to work with these guys. It is very inspiring to meet people who are committed and dedicated to their craft."

Lea was so hands-on as coach that she was just as nervous as, if not more jittery than, her Belle.

Then again, at the party, Lea was the first to let her hair down. Figuratively, because her tresses were tied in that signature bun.

"I had a ball!" she declared. "I had a good time!"

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① BATMAN BEGINS
MTRCB GP
1:00, 4:00, 7:00, 10:00
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② MR. & MRS. SMITH
MTRCB: PG-13
11:10, 1:50, 4.30, 7:10, 9:50
④ MADAGASCAR
MTRCB: GP
1:40, 3:45, 5:50,7:55,10:00
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3 BATMAN BEGINS 10:20, 1:25, 4:30 7:35, 10:40 GP
4 NASAAN KA MAN 10:35, 1:05, 3:35 6:05, 8:35, 11:05 R-13

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BATMAN BEGINS GP 12:30,3:15,6:00,8:45
MR. & MRS. SMITH PG13 1:40,4:20,7:00,9:40
MR. & MRS SMITH PG13 11:40,2:20,5:00,7:40,10:20
NASAAN KA MAN R13 12:40,3:00,5:20,7:40,10:00
BATMAN BEGINS GP 11:35,2:20,5:05,7:50,10:35

star group of cinemas movie guide
IN DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
starmall EDSA-SHAW
Tel. No. 726.61.50
3 Nasaan Ka Man
4 Batman Begins
5 Mr & Mrs Smith
P75 Lang Dolby Digital Pa Experience @ Starmall Edsa 4 & 5 Metropolis 5
METROPOLIS ALABANG star
Tel. No. 850.42.65
1 Kakaibang Karisma
2 Mr & Mrs Smith
3 Under Renovation
4 Under Renovation
5 Batman Begins
6 Nasaan Ka Man
starmall LAS PIÑAS
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2 Rental Reservation
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CINEMA 4 BATMAN BEGINS GP 11:50, 2:40, 5:30, 8:20
CINEMA 5 BATMAN BEGINS GP 10:30, 1:20, 4:10, 7:00, 9:50
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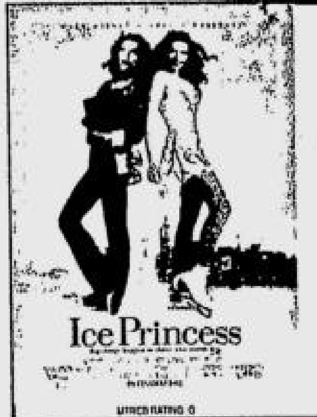

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2 MR. & MRS. SMITH 11:15FS/11:40MF/02:00/04:20/06:40 08:40LFS/09:00LMF/11:00END
megamall 633-1901
BATMAN BEGINS 11:15FS/11:45MF/02:30/05:15 07:35LFS/08:00LMF/10:20END
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1 STARWARS: EPISODE III [illegible]
2 BATMAN BEGINS [illegible]
3 MR. & MRS. SMITH [illegible]

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4 BATMAN BEGINS
5 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
6 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
7 SHUTTER
8 NASAAN KA MAN
9 NASAAN KA MAN
10 BATMAN BEGINS
11 PREMONITION
12 MADAGASCAR
sm city fairview
1 NASAAN KA MAN
2 HOUSE OF WAX
3 PREMONITION
4 BATMAN BEGINS
5 SHUTTER
6 MR. & MRS. SMITH
7 BATMAN BEGINS
8 STARWARS: EPISODE III
9 NASAAN KA MAN
10 A LOT LIKE LOVE
11 SAY THAT YOU LOVE ME
12 MADAGASCAR
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2 MR. AND MRS. SMITH
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4 PREMONITION
5 NASAAN KA MAN
6 POOH'S HEFFALUMP
7 BATMAN BEGINS
8 MR. & MRS. SMITH
sm city manila
1 MR. & MRS. SMITH
2 PREMONITION
3 MAN OF THE HOUSE
4 BATMAN BEGINS
5 A LOT LIKE LOVE
6 BATMAN BEGINS
7 HOUSE OF WAX
8 MR. AND MRS. SMITH
9 NASAAN KA MAN
10 SAY THAT YOU LOVE ME
11 SHUTTER
12 NASAAN KA MAN
sm city sta mesa
1 MR. & MRS. SMITH
2 NASAAN KA MAN
3 BATMAN BEGINS
4 NASAAN KA MAN
5 BATMAN BEGINS
6 SIN CITY
7 A LOT LIKE LOVE
8 ARE WE THERE YET?
9 STARWARS: EPISODE III
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3 MR. & MRS. SMITH
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9 SAY THAT YOU LOVE ME
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1 MR. & MRS. SMITH
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4 SAY THAT YOU LOVE ME
5 A LOT LIKE LOVE
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6 NASAAN KA MAN
7 SAY THAT YOU LOVE ME
8 BATMAN BEGINS
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sm city baguio
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sm city marilao
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3 MR. & MRS. SMITH
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3 MR. & MRS. SMITH
4 BATMAN BEGINS
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sm city cebu
1 STAR WARS: EPISODE III
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5 SIN CITY
6 SHUTTER
7 NASAAN KA MAN
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2 SHUTTER
3 NASAAN KA MAN
4 THE AMITYVILLE HORROR
5 MR. & MRS. SMITH
6 BATMAN BEGINS
sm city batangas
1 MR. & MRS. SMITH
2 NASAAN KA MAN
3 BATMAN BEGINS
4 A LOT LIKE LOVE
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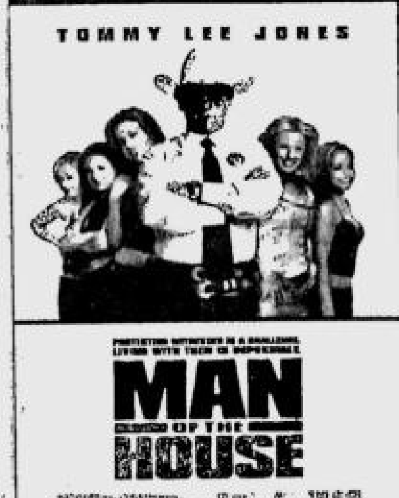

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1 BATMAN BEGINS • THX
12:30 3:30 6:30 9:30

2 BATMAN BEGINS
1:00 4:00 7:00 10:00

3 STAR WARS Episode III
12:40 3:40 6:40 9:40

4 MR. AND MRS. SMITH
11:00 1:45 4:30 7:15 10:00

5 NASAAN KA MAN
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

6 BATMAN BEGINS
12:00 3:00 6:00 9:00

7 SIN CITY
1:50 4:30 7:10 9:50

8 A LOT LIKE LOVE
3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

9 MADAGASCAR
1:20 3:30 5:40 7:50 10:00

10 SHUTTER
1:00 3:10 5:20 7:30 9:40

ERMITA
536-7809 to 12

1 BATMAN BEGINS
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2 PREMONITION
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3 SIN CITY
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4 NASAAN KA MAN
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6 BATMAN BEGINS
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7 MR. AND MRS. SMITH
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METRO EAST
682-8193 • 682-8199

1 SHUTTER
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2 BATMAN BEGINS
4:30 7:40 10:00

3 A LOT LIKE LOVE
12:05 2:20 4:30 7:40 10:00

4 MR. AND MRS. SMITH
12:00 2:25 4:45 7:15 9:30

5 COACH CARTER
12:30 3:20 6:10 9:00

6 BATMAN BEGINS
3:50 7:00 10:00

7 BATMAN BEGINS
12:40 3:50 7:00 10:00

8 NASAAN KA MAN
12:50 3:10 5:30 7:50 10:00

CITISQUARE MALABON
288-2575

1 NASAAN KA MAN
2 NASAAN KA MAN
3 BATMAN BEGINS
4 BATMAN BEGINS

PIONEER
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1 BATMAN BEGINS
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3 NASAAN KA MAN
4 MR. AND MRS. SMITH

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2 MR. AND MRS. SMITH
3 SHUTTER
4 BATMAN BEGINS

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2 A LOT LIKE LOVE
3 NASAAN KA MAN
4 MR. AND MRS. SMITH
5 BATMAN BEGINS
6 BATMAN BEGINS

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July 28,2005

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G1	GLORIETTA 1	1 NASAAN KA MAN	2 MR. & MRS. SMITH	3 BATMAN BEGINS	4 MR. & MRS. SMITH
G4	GLORIETTA 4	1 BATMAN BEGINS	2 BATMAN BEGINS	3 THX BATMAN BEGINS 12:45, 3:45, 6:45, 9:45 GUARANTEED SEATS	
		4 NASAAN KA MAN	5 MR. & MRS. SMITH	6 BATMAN BEGINS	7 MR. & MRS. SMITH
GB1	GREENBELT 1	1 NASAAN KA MAN 12:00, 2:20, 4:40, 7:00, 9:20	2 BATMAN BEGINS 12:10, 3:10, 6:10, 9:10		
GB3	GREENBELT 3	1 THX BATMAN BEGINS 1:30, 4:30, 7:30, 10:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX BATMAN BEGINS 12:30, 3:30, 6.30, 9:30 GUARANTEED SEATS		
		3 NASAAN KA MAN 1.40, 4.00, 6 20,8 40, 11 00 GUARANTEED SEATS	4 MR. & MRS. SMITH 1 20, 3 50, 6 20 8 50, 11 20 GUARANTEED SEATS	5 BATMAN BEGINS 2 30, 5 30, 8 30, 11 30 GUARANTEED SEATS	
ATC	ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX BATMAN BEGINS	2 NASAAN KA MAN		
		3 MR. & MRS. SMITH	4 BATMAN BEGINS	5 BATMAN BEGINS	
ACC	AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 BATMAN BEGINS	2 NASAAN KA MAN	3 MRS. & MRS. SMITH	4 SHUTTER

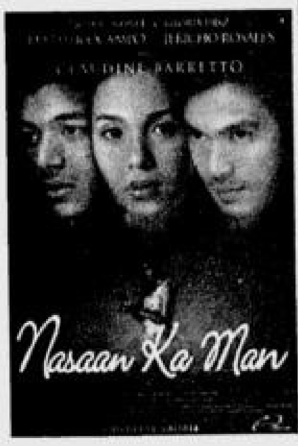
Stargazing at the Glorietta 1

AYALA CINEMAS

Meet & Greet the stars of
Nasaan Ka Man

June 22 (Wed.) 4:00 PM
GLORIETTA 1
CINEMA LOBBY

FREE Picture Taking with the stars
for the first thirty (30) moviegoers who will present their NASAAN KA MAN movietickets at the Glorietta 1 cinema customer service booth on June 22.



The film NASAAN KA MAN is Now Showing at Ayala Cinemas.

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NOW SHOWING AT AYALA CINEMAS
MTRCB Rating: General Audience

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⑥ Mr. & Mrs. Smith
⑦ Batman begins

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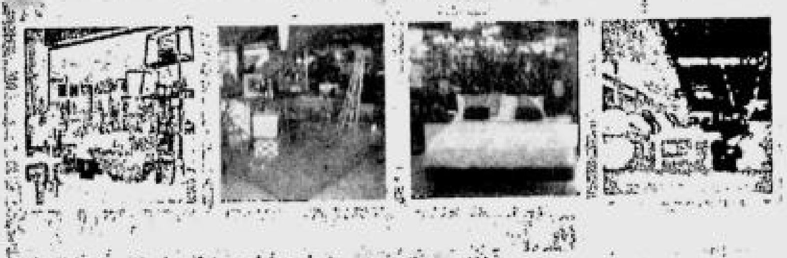


The Home Finds of Angel Jacob, Christine Bersola-Babao, Ces Drilon and Rico Blanco

With the special participation of Ana Rocha-Castillo

June 15-July 15, 2005
Home Market, 3rd Level

Is Gary V really 40?

By Nini Valera

"THIS IS the last time that I'm going to talk about my age," declared Gary Valenciano, shaking his head, hair stiffened with gel and streaked with color in the manner of the youth.

But first admitted he was 40, and turning 41 on Aug. 6. He also confessed that the "energy" he had been known for since the 1980s was "not that easy to keep going."

Then again, he noted, "Most of my hits are ballads."

Latest award

One of these hits, "How Did You Know," written by Ogie Alcasid, won for Gary the Best Performance by a Male Recording Artist award at the recent Aliw Awards. He shared the honors with Artstrong, a new pop group.

Gary is set to release "Soul Full," his 21st album, in August. The CD collection consists of inspirational songs, including his latest composition "Break Me," which he sang for Universal Records' Bella Tan minutes before she died.

"Break Me" was also the first song that Gary had written in four years. His all-time favorite is still "Take Me Out of the Dark," a plaintive plea for redemption.

Only Gary V can transform inspirational songs into pop hits.

"I guess the originality of putting your faith in your music... is the most original thing I have done for entertainment," said Gary. "It's like making faith look cool."

And only Gary V can look like a cool dude at 40. He's even a cool dad to his kids—Paolo, Gabriel and Keanna.

"Paolo is 20," Gary said. "He and Gabriel are into music and have their own bands. Having my kids and staying in touch with them have played a major role in [my still being around]. I don't intentionally try to reach the youth, but because of [being a father] I'm able to do that."

Paolo and Gabriel are college students at De La Salle University, Gary's alma mater, though of course he dropped out of his Business course after a year in college.

"I realized that business was not for me," he confided.

Gary has had one of the longest-running careers in the local music business, and he'd like to keep it going.

"I don't want to put a time frame on it. I [just] want to enjoy it while it's there. I enjoy performing, it's fun. It's awesome to see people's faces when they ask how I do it. I say, 'God is good, I still have the energy, and I still love it.'"

A few regrets

Still, Gary confessed to having regrets.

"There were things I didn't do that I should have done, and things that I did that I shouldn't have," he revealed. "There was a stretch—from 1996 to 1998—when things were set for me in the international scene. But I didn't make the right decisions. The [record] deals didn't pull through."

He was abroad at the time. "So I came back home and thank God, I still had my following. But I guess the window of opportunity to come up with an international career suddenly became smaller."

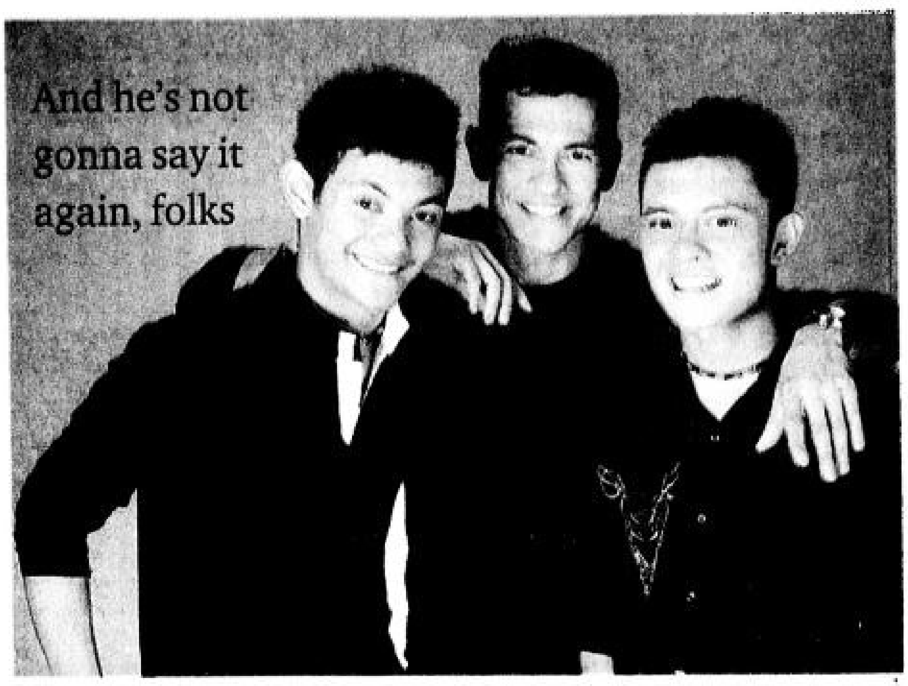
Gary made his last movie, "Hataw Na," 10 years ago. He'd like to do another one again. "But," he confided, "I don't see scripts that I'd like to do."

One more try

He'd also like to score a movie, following what he describes as a "crude attempt" with an independent inspirational film "Hinugot Sa Dilim," shot on 16 mm.

His second son, Gabriel, is definitely going in that direction, according to Gary. "He did something for church. He put together a presentation of their youth camp, and it floored me. I'm not speaking as a Dad here. With the technology that we have today, Gabriel's on the right path."

It's been "great" raising his kids, he said. "They're so good. I've always believed in the word of God, 'You teach the young the way they should go,' and they would stick to that. If they make left turns when they're supposed to make a right, they would always come back. I'm seeing that right now."


And he's not gonna say it again, folks

GABRIEL, Gary and Paolo Valenciano

Canada fest picks docu on Dumagats

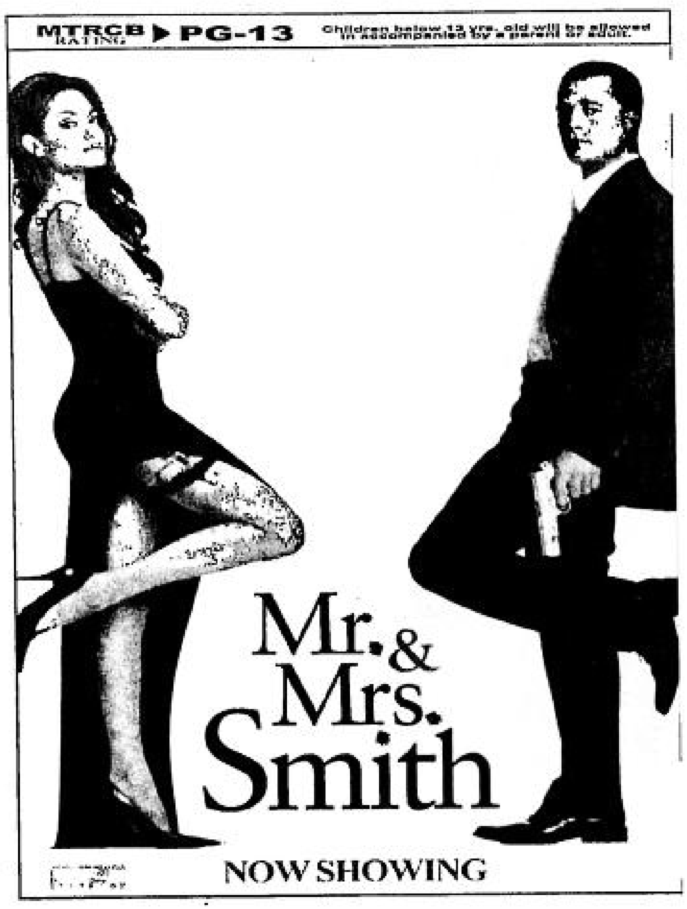
"THE CHILDREN of the Mountains," the film that launched the call for entries to the Moonrise Film Festival has won a slot in Planet in Focus 2005, Canada's annual environmental film festival, on Sept. 28 to Oct. 2.

The 45-minute documentary highlights the plight of the Agta Dumagats in Aurora province, who are being displaced by unabated logging in the hinterlands.

First screened on Earth Day, April 22, 2005, "The Children of the Mountains" will again be shown during the Moonrise Film Festival Aug. 18 to 21, at the Gateway Mall.

Says Jukka Holopainen, president of the Center on Environmental Awareness and Education (CEAD): "The Moonrise Film Festival is an initial attempt to provide a venue for the public showing of documentary-format film focused on Philippine environment and culture. We hope that by showing films about the environment such as 'The Children of the Mountains,' we can fast-track delivering environmental education to all Filipinos."

For more information, call 721-7360 or visit www.moonrisefilmfest.org.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Children below 13 yrs. old will be allowed in accompanied by a parent or adult.
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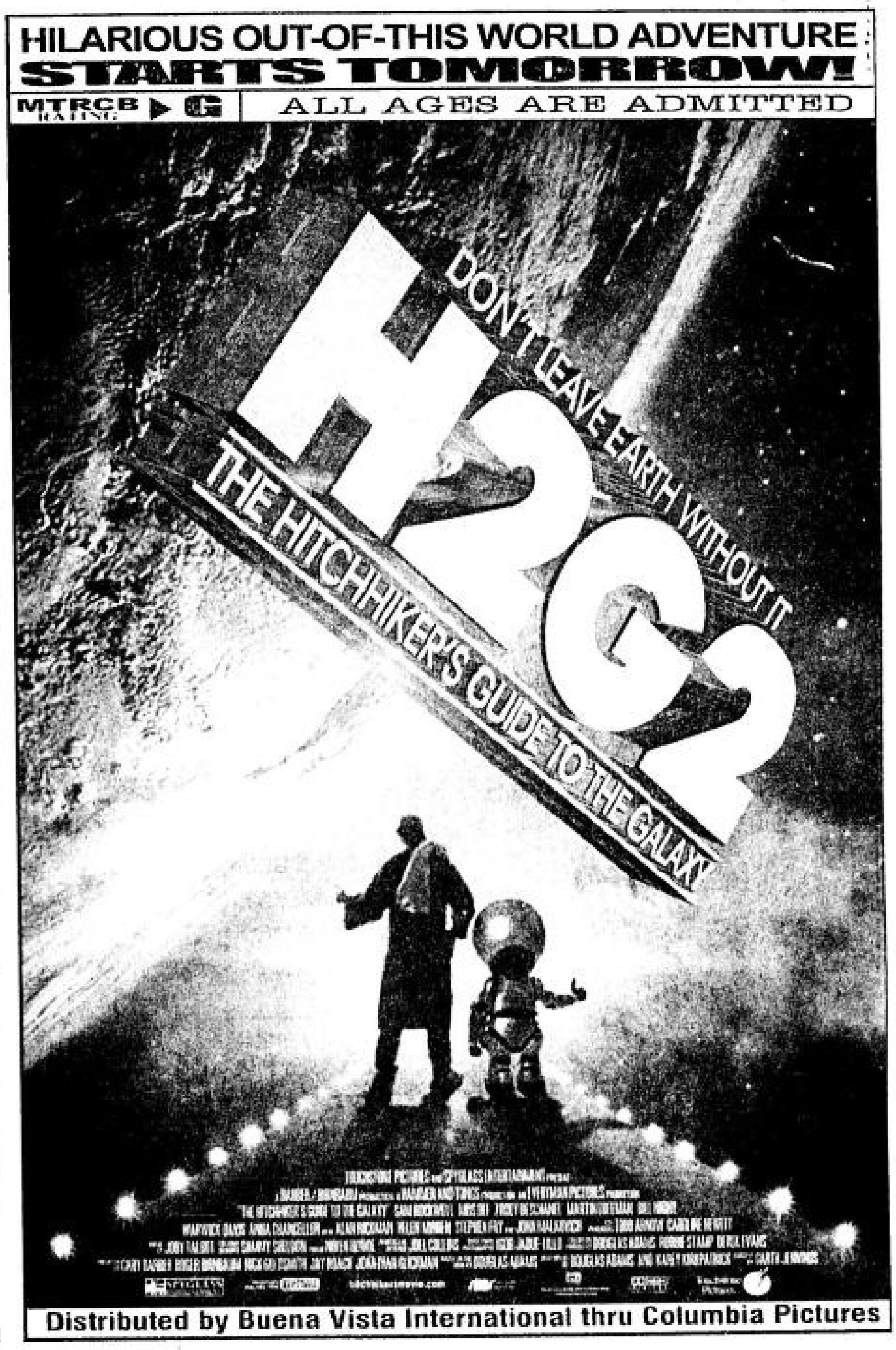
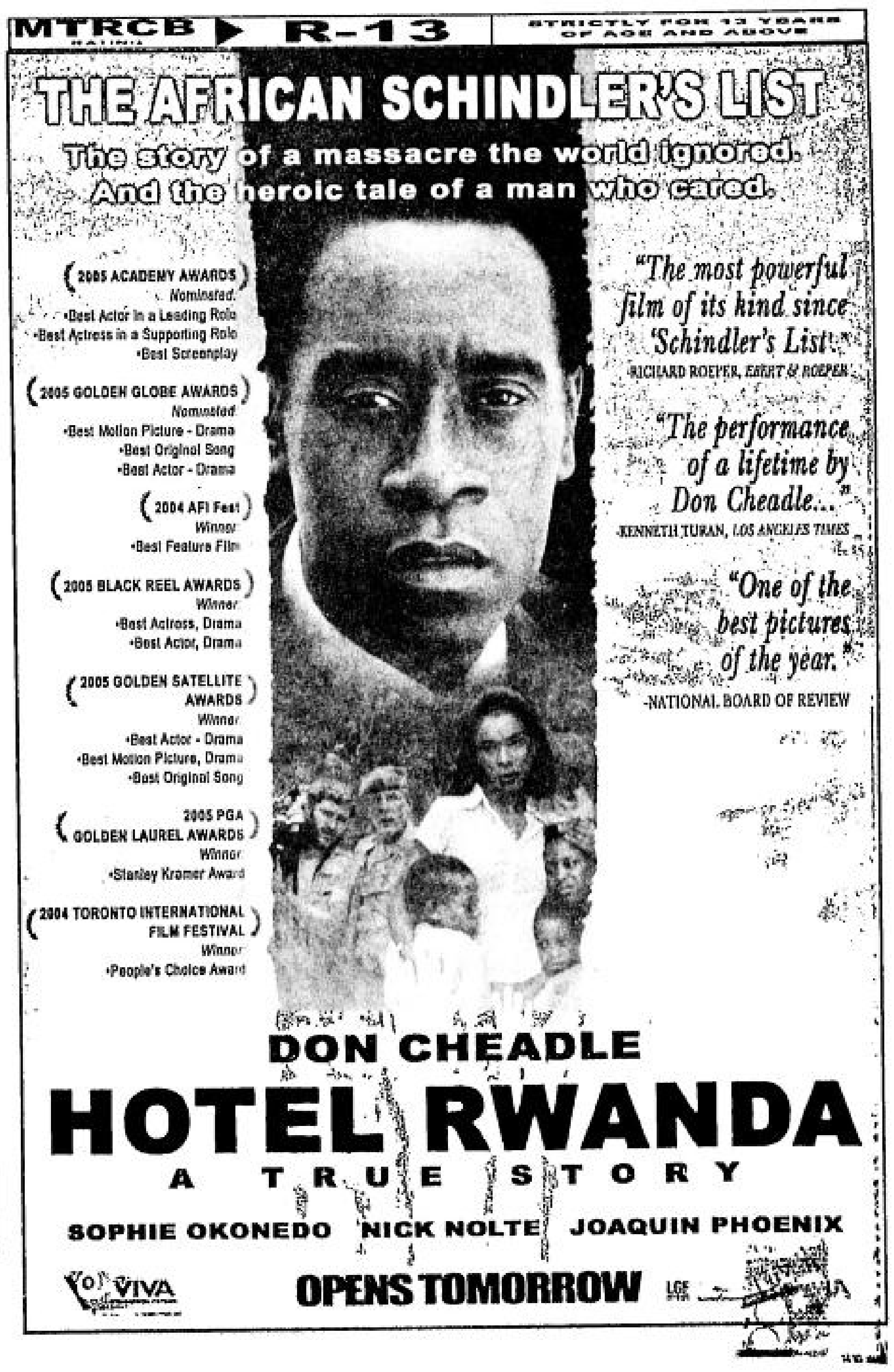

HILARIOUS OUT-OF-THIS WORLD ADVENTURE
STARTS TOMORROW!
MTRCB RATING ▶ G
ALL AGES ARE ADMITTED
DON'T LEAVE EARTH WITHOUT IT
H2G2
THE HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY
Distributed by Buena Vista International thru Columbia Pictures

OPENS TOMORROW
Can they survive the wedding day?
Michael Vartan
Jane Fonda
Jennifer Lopez
MONSTER-in-LAW
THE YEAR'S #1 ROMANTIC COMEDY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The story of a massacre the world ignored.
And the heroic tale of a man who cared.
2005 ACADEMY AWARDS
Nominated
•Best Actor in a Leading Role
•Best Actress in a Supporting Role
•Best Screenplay
2005 GOLDEN GLOBE AWARDS
Nominated
•Best Motion Picture - Drama
•Best Original Song
•Best Actor - Drama
2004 AFI Fest
Winner
•Best Feature Film
2005 BLACK REEL AWARDS
Winner
•Best Actress, Drama
•Best Actor, Drama
2005 GOLDEN SATELLITE AWARDS
Winner
•Best Actor - Drama
•Best Motion Picture, Drama
•Best Original Song
2005 PGA GOLDEN LAUREL AWARDS
Winner
•Stanley Kramer Award
2004 TORONTO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL
Winner
•People's Choice Award
"The most powerful film of its kind since 'Schindler's List'."
-RICHARD ROEPER, EBERT & ROEPER
"The performance of a lifetime by Don Cheadle..."
-KENNETH TURAN, LOS ANGELES TIMES
"One of the best pictures of the year."
-NATIONAL BOARD OF REVIEW
DON CHEADLE
HOTEL RWANDA
A TRUE STORY
SOPHIE OKONEDO
NICK NOLTE
JOAQUIN PHOENIX
VIVA
OPENS TOMORROW

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ENTERTAINMENT

E-mail: pr_entertainment@inquirer.com.ph
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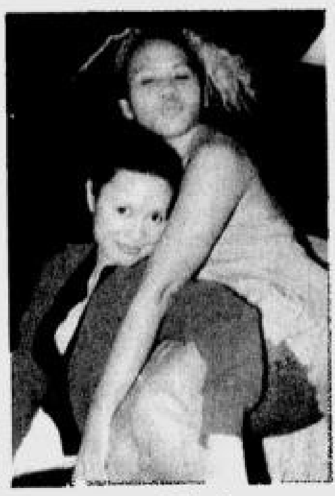
GASTON as shutterbug: Calvin Millado shoots the party.

HUNGRY Beast heads for the buffet.

BEAST catches Belle: KC and Jett


LEA Salonga and Bituin Escalante vamp it up.

TEACHER Lea and prized pupil KC flash twin smiles.

Beast and Belle have a ball

They could have danced all night

By Bayani San Diego Jr.
Photos by Conrad Delfino for Atlantis Productions

INQUIRER EXCLUSIVE

CAN you blame them for partying as though there were no tomorrow?

So extensive and exhausting were rehearsals in the past month that, soon after the curtain fell at Meralco Theater Thursday last week, the cast and crew of the new Atlantis Productions musical, "Beauty and the Beast," made a mad dash to nearby Discovery Suites (the Serendipity Lounge on the 22nd floor, specifically) for a post-premiere party.

The road to Discovery, however, was paved with all sorts of challenges.

It has been an exhilarating journey, quipped director Bobby Garcia. "It's the most difficult show we've done so far, logistics-wise. We have 200 costumes and it's our first family-oriented musical."

"BEAUTY" cast and crew

LEA'S hubby Robert Chien held his wife's hand throughout the show.

And for the first time in all of its seven years, Atlantis had kids not only in the audience, but also in the cast (three girls shared the role of Chip).

Atlantis had always been known for such cutting-edge fare as "Rent," "The Rocky Horror Show," and "Urinetown."

Illustrious coaches

Bobby and company, however, were not the type to shy away from a mighty challenge.

In a panic, Bobby recruited friends Lea Salonga and Menchu Lauchengco-Yulo as voice and acting coaches for the two Belles, KC Concepcion and Karel Marquez.

"I will charge next time," Lea teased Bobby. "Set aside a budget for us, please! Menchu and I have agreed that we would only work as teachers in tandem!"

To digress a bit: Menchu decided to destress by flying to Boracay. "She's getting a glitter tattoo," Lea cracked.

It was way past one a.m., yet the soiree was still in full blast.

Lea danced the flamenco for Bobby. Jett Pangan and Pinky Marquez headed straight for the buffet. Another Atlantis regular, Bituin Escalante, vamped it up for the shutterbugs, including Calvin Millado, the musical's beefy baddie Gaston, who was shooting a video of the party.

(Bituin will headline Atlantis' next big show, "Aida" by Tim Rice and Elton John, which will be directed by "Beauty" cast member Chari Arespacochaga.)

Cloud nine

That night's Belle, KC, was on cloud nine, but often engaged teacher Lea and leading man Jett in quiet conversations.

She had nursed a cold earlier in the day. Still she breezed through the immense pressure, meriting a standing ovation from the first-night crowd. At the bash, she was un-

BEAST/ A25

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
TV GUIDE
Tuesday, June 21, 2005

club tv
saturday_8pm
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ABC

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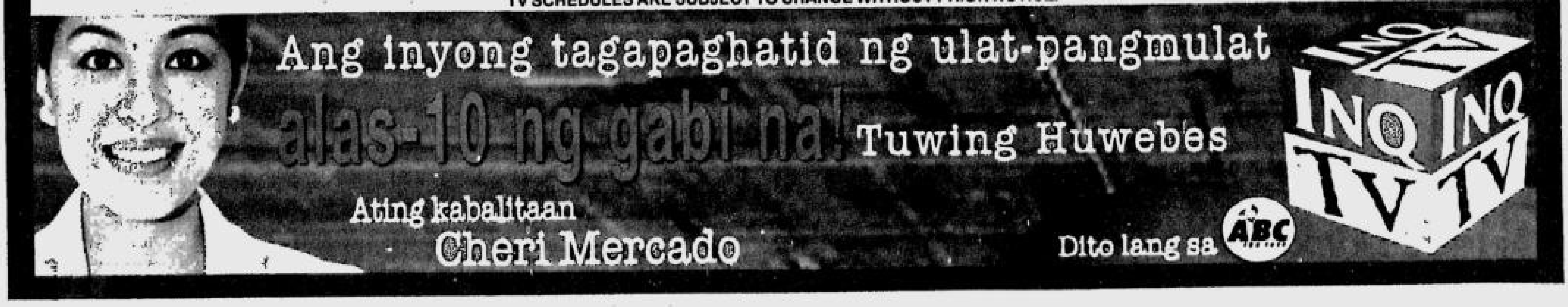
Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABS-CBN 2	Kapamilya Cinema			Pasion de Amor	Showbiz No. 1	Mr. Bean	Naruto	Qpids	TV Patrol World		Meteor Garden Full Edition	Mga Anghel Na Walang Langit	Kampanerang Kuba	Ikaw Ang Lahat Sa Akin	Memories Of Bali	Bora			Insider
ABC 5			EZ Shop		FIBA (Reruns)				Sentro	Lizzie Mcguire	ABC Action Movies				Big News	The Probe Team Documentaries		ESPN Golf	
GMA 7	Saang Sulok Ng Langit	Now and Forever	Glass Shoes	Tenjho Tenge	Shaman King	Flame Of Recca	Full House	24 Oras		Darna		Encantadia	Extra Challenge		All About Eve	Bahay Mo Ba 'To?			Saksi
RPN 9		Metro TV Shopping	Defenders Of The Earth	Hey Arnold!	As Told By Ginger	Wild Thornberries	Sponge Bob	The Insider	Tough Enough	7 Days		Medium		Cold Case		Newswatch Now	Tuesday Night Treat		
IBC 13		Lifestyle		EZ Shop		Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	Pangarap Kong Jackpot		Shakey's V-League		TBA					IBC News Tonite	Up Close And Personal	
JackTV	Just For Laughs	Just For Laughs	Hip Hop Nation	WWE Bottomline		WWE Afterburn		X-Play	Banzai	Mad TV		Trigger Happy TV	Primetime Glick	South Park	The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	Stripperella	Family Guy	Wwe Heat	
Nickelodeon	Blues Clues	Rugrats	The Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	All That	Are You Afraid of the Dark?	100 Deeds of Eddie McDowd	The Amanda Show	The Adventures Jimmy Neutron	Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	As Told By Ginger	Yakkity Yak	Chalkzone	Rocket Power	Hey Arnold!	The Wild Thornberrys	The Angry Beavers	Rugrats
MYX	MYX Fiesta	Urban MYX	Rock MYX	Pop MYX	My MYX	Take 5	OPM MYX	Mellow MYX	Star MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		Pop MYX	Urban MYX	Top Of The Pops	Mobile MYX Top Picks	My MYX	MYX Backtrax	OPM MYX	Mellow MYX
ETC		Good Morning Miami	Knock First	Blind Date	Fifth Wheel	Elimidate	Change of Heart	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover	JKX	Simple Life	One Tree Hill		Who Wants To Marry My Dad 2		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	
Cinema One		Talpandas				Ang Bukas Ay Akin				Palaban				Wait A Minit Kapeng Mainit				Kapalit	
Studio 23								Get Backers	Beyblade	Wazzup Wazzup	The Rebel Billionaire	Angel		Smallville		News Central	Oprah		The Men's Room
AXN		CSI: Miami		CSI: Miami		When Disasters Strike!		The Associates		Alias (Season III)		Ripley's Believe It or Not		CSI: NY (Season I)		The Amazing Race 5		AXN Shakedown	
Star World	Frasier	The Bold & The Beautiful		Hollywood Squares	Home Improvement	Buffy The Vampire Slayer		The Simpsons	The Drew Carey Show	Star News Asia	Friends	Charmed		Life After Baywatch		Miss Match		Friends	Charmed
CNN		Business International		Larry King Live		World News	World Sport	Business International		World News	World Sport	World News Asia		World News	World Sport	World News Asia		Your World Today	
National Geographic		Pharaoh's Week		Seconds From Disaster		Interpol Investigates		Wildlife Detectives	Insects From Hell	Wow		About Asia		National Geographic Specials		Air Crash Investigation		Seconds From Disaster	
Solar Sports		TV Shopping	WTA '05 Pacific Life Open Indian Wells, USA					Women's Volleyball '04					Sports Desk	NBA Greatest Game				Vintage NBA	
Lifestyle Network	Secret Gardens	The Fix	Mission Organization	Carol Duvall	Molto Mario	Hot Off The Grill	Good Eats	Extreme Cuisine	Unwrapped	Passion For Dessert	Second Look		Look For Less	Life & Style		Clean House		Road & Track	Back To Basics
HBO		Pure Country (3:05PM)				The Brady Bunch In The White House			Let's Get Harry (6:20PM)			Secondhand Lions (8:15PM)				Carnivale 04: Black Blizzard	Carnivale 05: Babylon (10:45PM)		Carnivale 06: Pick A Number
Star Movies			The Ticket (3:40PM)	Sonic Impact (4:10PM)			Babe: Pig In The City (5:45PM)				The Rats (A.K.A. The Colony)			Kaena: The Prophecy			Jeepers Creepers		
Cartoon Network	Scooby-Doo Show	The All New Popeye Show		Tom & Jerry Show	The Woody Woodpecker Show	Ed, Edd N Eddy	Static Shock	Codename: Kids Next Door	Duck Dodgers	Zoids Fuzors	Medabots	The Looney Tunes Show		The Powerpuff Girls	Dexter's Laboratory	Time Squad	Thundercats	Codename: Kids Next Door	Duck Dodgers
ESPN						In The Driver's Seat	LPGA Golf Wegmans Rochester					World Volleyball Grand Prix			Sportscenter Asia	2005 WPBA West Coast Classic		Streetball: The 2004 and 1 Mix tape tour	Sportscenter Asia
Disney Channel	Mr. Bean: The Animated Series	Totally Spies	Art Attack/Unlikative Bunny	So Little Time	Buzz Lightyear Of Star Command	Martin Mystery	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr. Bean: The Animated Series	House Of Mouse	Stuck In The Suburbs			So Little Time	Sabrina, The Animated Series	Mickey Mouse and Friends	Chip N Dale's Rescue Rangers	Land Before Time II: The Great Valley Adventure	
Cinemax				Dead in the Water			Orange County (5:45PM)			Blizzard (7:15PM)				Beverly Hills Cop			Out Of Bounds (10:45PM)		
Hallmark Channel	Who's The Boss	Just Cause		HCA: The Fairytaler	Sesame Street		Mad About You	Who's The Boss	The Nanny	Sue Thomas: F.B.Eye		Just Cause		Midsomer Murders: Ring Out Your Dead			Missing (10:35PM)		Sue Thomas: F.B.Eye (11:25PM)
Discovery Channel		Real Flying Saucers		Pin-Ups		The Ultimate Guide		Lost City In The Clouds		Rides		Human Discovery		Wild Discovery		Magnetic Storm		Science Mysteries	
MTV Philippines			Hangin Out at MTV		MTV Get Spotted		TRL		Ask Mayonnaise	MTV Dives		Carmen & Dave	Room Raiders	High School Stories	I Want A Famous Face	On Board at MTV	Whatever Things	VH1 Video Collection	
Sports Plus				Allianz C'ship Highlights		Get A Grip On Golf	Golf Globe '03	Michigan 500 Highlights		FMX		World Poker Tour Ep 13 Road to Championship				World's Greatest Auto Shows		Nopi Tunerversion	BD 12 Palm Spring

TV SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.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5-mo. budget deficit stays below target

By Michelle V. Remo

THE NATIONAL government's budget deficit stood at P7.6 billion in May, a figure that the Department of Finance said would likely bring the full-year number way below the official target of P180 billion for 2005.

The DOF yesterday reported that the national government generated P68.2 billion in revenues but spent P75.8 billion last month.

The May deficit figure brought the budget gap for the first five months of the year to only P67.8 billion, 12.4 percent lower than what was recorded during the same period last year.

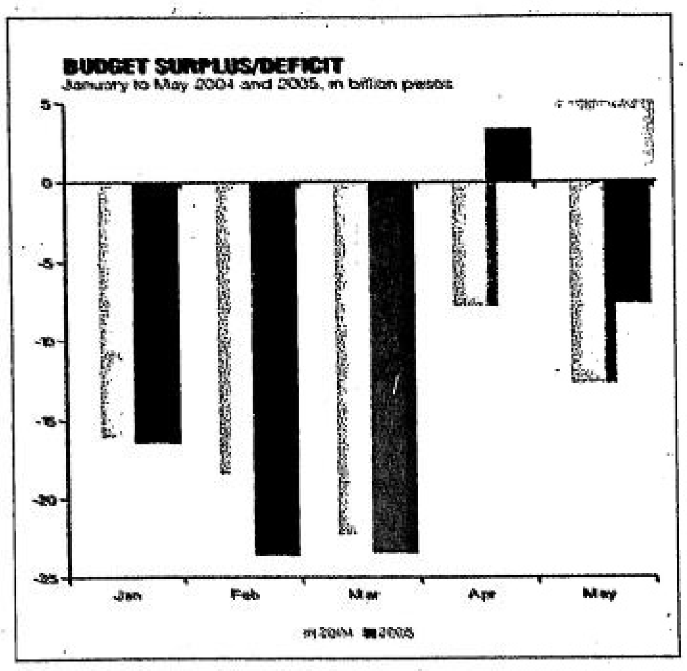
Deputy Treasurer Eduardo Mendiola said the deficit as of May gave the government enough leeway to meet the P98.52-billion target for the first semester. With the deficit at only P67.8 billion in the first five months, the government can afford to post a shortfall of P30.72 in June and still meet the first-semester target.

Total revenues for the first five months of the year amounted to P322.3 billion, up by 11.6 percent from the figure in the same period last year. Expenditures, on the other hand, grew by 6.5 percent to P390.1 billion.

"We can certainly expect to end up with a deficit that is lower than what was programmed for the entire year, especially since our revenue collection continues to be strong," Mendiola said in a press briefing yesterday.

The Bureau of Internal Rev-

5-MONTH/B4



Treasury bill rates continue to climb

BANKS continued to seek higher risk premiums amid the unstable political environment, forcing the Bureau of Treasury to reject all bids for the 364-day bills and some of the bids for the 182-day government securities.

The benchmark 91-day treasury bill rate rose by 9.9 basis points to 5.883 percent. The 182-day rate inched up by 14.3 basis points to 6.927 percent.

The six-month debt instrument could have fetched a rate as high as 6.988 percent had the Treasury raised in full its P2-billion weekly debt offering for each tenor during the weekly auction yesterday. But fiscal authorities decided to accept only P1.35 billion worth of bids for the 182-day bills to allow only a minimal interest rate increase.

"The market behaved very cautiously. The bids they gave for the one-year (T-bills) were unreasonably high so we had to reject them," Treasurer Omar Cruz said in a press briefing after the auctions yesterday.

Yesterday was the second consecutive weekly auction wherein the Treasury had to reject all bids for the one-year debt instrument.

Had the Treasury accepted bids for the 364-day government securities, the rate could have risen by as much as 25.8 basis points to 8.109 percent.

All tenors were still over-subscribed, but the volume of bids were relatively low, considering the still high level of liquidity among banks. Volume of bids reached P2.88 billion, P3.02 billion, and P2.26 billion for the three-month, six-month, and one-year bills.

A securities trader said the decline in the volume of bids was not a reflection of diminishing liquidity, but was only due to the market's hesitation to place bulk of its money in government securities after the scandals hounding the Arroyo administration broke out.

"Everything has to do only with what's going on in the political scene, because liquidity is definitely still there," the trader said.

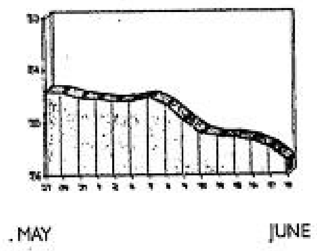
He cited the P23 billion worth of Retail Treasury Bonds (RTBs) that will mature next week, and thus provide more cash to the market. But the source said it was unlikely that much of the additional funds would be invested in government securities if the uncertainty created by the political noise persisted.

The controversies faced by the Arroyo leadership, such as allegations that the President cheated in last year's elections and that her family was involved in jueteng payoffs, put an end to the seven consecutive weeks of across-the-board decline in treasury bill rates. *Michelle V. Remo*

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES

PESO-DOLLAR RATE



P 55.745 = $ 1
As of 5 p.m., June 20, 2005

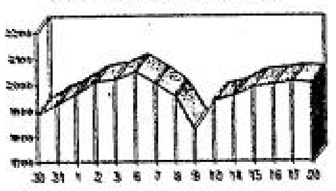
¥ 108.70 = $ 1
As of 5 p.m., June 20, 2005

GOLD: $440.70-441.20
per ounce Hong Kong, June 20, 2005

STOCK MARKET

Shares close 0.32% lower

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B2)

SHARE prices closed 0.32 percent lower yesterday, ending a five-day rally on profit-taking as record high oil prices and continuing political concerns encouraged caution, dealers said.

At the same time, sustained interest in Philippine Long Distance Telephone (PLDT) and Globe Telecom limited the losses, they said.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index lost 6.46 points at 2,004.71, having traded between 1,999.63 and 2,014.52. Turnover reached 882.5 million shares worth P751.24 million.

The broader all-shares index fell 3.65 points to 1,212.87.

Losers led gainers 35 to 30, with 50 stocks unchanged.

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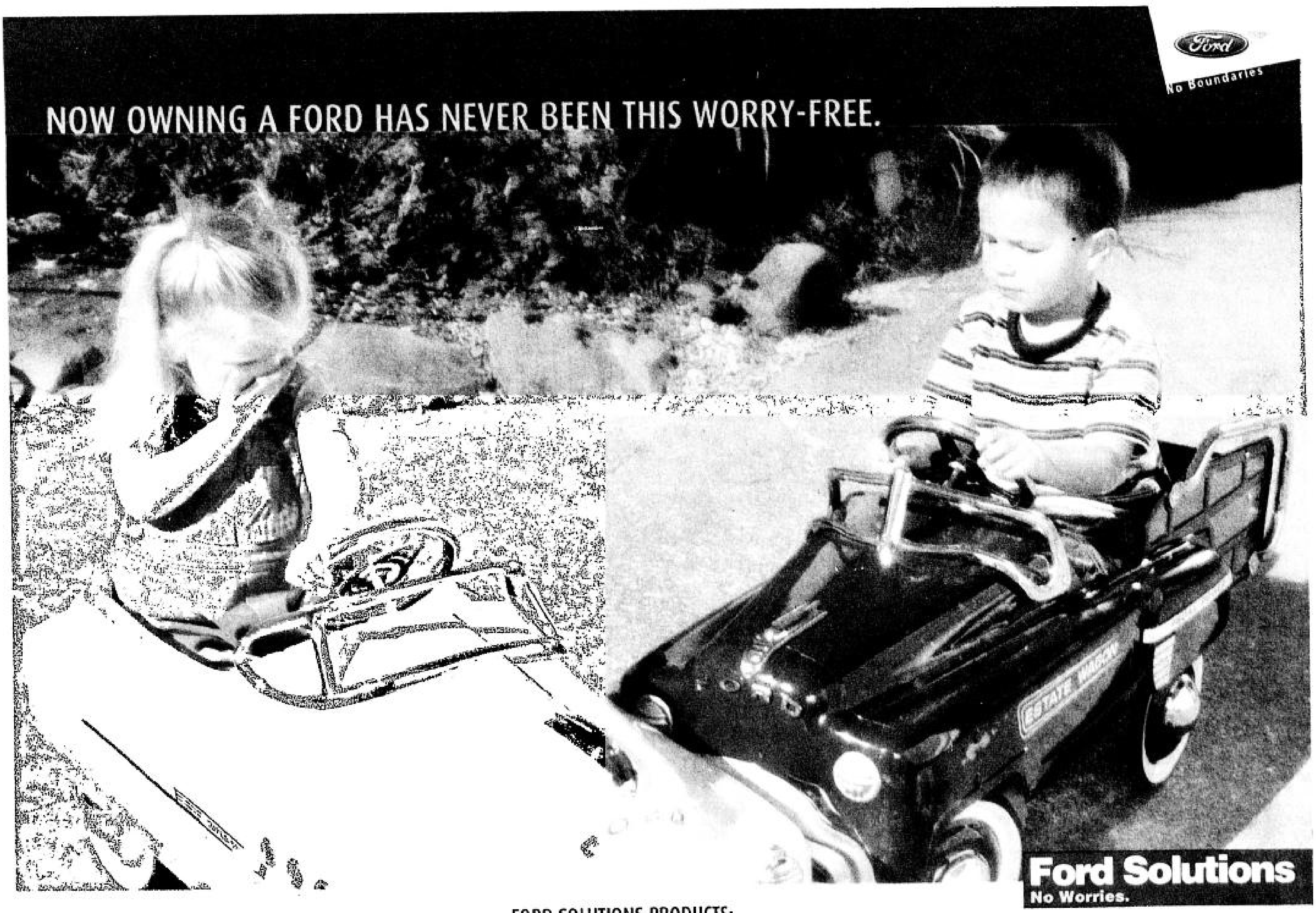
Foreign chambers score Naia 3 delay /B8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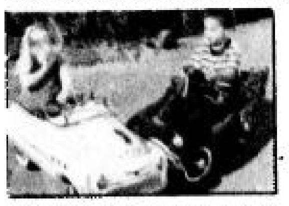
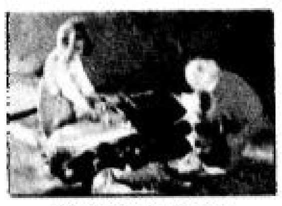


Comprehensive Vehicle Insurance

Emergency Roadside Assistance

Premium Extended Warranty



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(As of June 20, 2005)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	3.65	3.65	3.65	3.65	12,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	32	32	32	32	399,600
Bank of the Phil. Islands	51.5	52	51	52	1,113,400
Citystate Savings Bank	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	400
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	390,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	51.5	51.5	51.5	51.5	260,000
International Exch. Bank	19	19	19	19	34,500
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	31.5	31.5	30.5	31	293,000
Philippine National Bank	42	42	41.5	42	151,400
Philippine Trust Co.	36	36	36	36	1,000
Security Bank Corp.	27	27.5	27	27.5	67,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	28.5	28.5	28.5	28.5	300
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Manulife Financial Corp.	2600	2600	2600	2600	140
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1770	1780	1765	1780	1,840
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	11.75	11.75	11.75	11.75	103,100
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1.1	1.12	1.1	1.12	1,823,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	830	.835	830	830	82,970
Ipeople Inc.	3.85	3.85	3.75	3.75	8,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.043	0.044	0.043	0.044	3,000,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.048	0.049	0.047	0.049	1,200,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	1.96	2	1.96	2	16,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.25	3.25	3.15	3.2	660,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1610	1635	1610	1615	136,890
Ivantage Corp.	0.67	0.67	0.66	0.66	330,000
Philweb Corp.	0.018	0.018	0.017	0.018	5,300,000
POWER, ENERGY & OTHER UTILITIES					
Manila Electric Co. A	15.75	16	15.75	15.75	2,300
Manila Electric Co. B	23.5	23.75	23.5	23.5	721,000
Manila Water Co. Inc.	6.8	6.8	6.7	6.7	1,232,000
Petron Corp.	3.2	3.25	3.2	3.2	1,744,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	18,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.67	0.67	0.67	0.67	240,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.59	0.59	0.59	0.59	20,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	3.4	3.5	3.4	3.5	410,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.15	3.2	3.15	3.15	57,000
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	1,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	31.5	31.5	31.5	31.5	35,500
Jollibee Foods Corp.	31	31.5	31	31.5	258,800
Pancake House Inc.	1.2	1.24	1.2	1.24	280,000
Swift Food Inc.	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	100,000
San Miguel Corp. A	58.5	59	58.5	59	64,200
San Miguel Corp. B	92	92.5	91.5	92.5	277,400
Universal Robina Corp.	17.25	17.25	17	17	3,300
Vitarich Corp.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	200,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.009	0.0095	0.009	0.0095	202,000,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.009	0.01	0.009	0.01	48,000,000
Ayala Corp.	360	365	345	350	115,220
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	5	5.1	5	5.1	200,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.031	0.031	0.031	0.031	2,000,000
A. Soriano Corp.	2.04	2.04	2.02	2.02	99,000
APC Group Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	10,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	7,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.42	0.45	0.42	0.45	190,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	11.5	11.5	11.5	11.5	5,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.14	1.14	1.12	1.14	13,722,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	200,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.29	0.29	0.28	0.28	4,420,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	2.7	2.75	2.7	2.7	1,440,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.14	1.14	1.14	1.14	200,000
Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp.	8.3	8.3	8.1	8.1	276,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	49.5	49.5	48	49	137,000
Global Equities Inc.	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	500,000
House Of Investments Inc.	1.06	1.06	1.04	1.04	215,000
Ionics Inc.	1.18	1.18	1.18	1.18	1,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.1	1,480,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.44	1.44	1.42	1.44	1,457,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.38	0.39	0.38	0.38	4,700,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	350,000
SM Investments Corp.	252.5	255	252.5	255	227,650
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.18	0.19	0.18	0.19	2,030,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	13,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.09	300,000
Panasonic Mfg Phil Corp.	8.5	8.5	8.5	8.5	1,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHERS					
Belle Corp.	1.12	1.14	1.12	1.12	2,119,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.75	0.79	0.75	0.79	300,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.12	1.14	1.04	1.14	3,868,000
Manila Jockey Club	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	17,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (PDR)	11.25	11.5	11	11.5	125,600
PLDT (10% Pref) Series J	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series O	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	300
PLDT (10% Pref) Series P	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Q	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	300
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	300
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
OTHERS					
Far Eastern University	450	450	450	450	100
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	8.2	8.2	8.1	8.1	2,738,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	2,140,000
Cebu Prop. Vent. A	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	10,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.205	0.205	0.205	0.205	1,400,000
EIB Realty Developers Inc.	0.145	0.145	0.145	0.145	100,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.39	0.39	0.37	0.38	1,600,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.54	1.54	1.46	1.46	5,721,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.175	0.175	0.17	0.17	200,000
SM Development Corp.	1.44	1.46	1.44	1.46	110,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	8.1	8.1	7.9	8	4,300,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	160,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0075	0.008	0.0075	0.0075	92,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	5.8	6.1	5.8	5.9	1,665,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	70,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.36	0.39	0.36	0.37	60,570,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.37	0.4	0.37	0.38	26,620,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.017	0.018	0.017	0.017	46,300,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.023	0.024	0.023	0.023	227,700,000
Omico Corp.	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	2,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.98	0.99	0.97	0.97	1,860,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	1.1	1.12	1.08	1.12	3,371,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	32.5	32.5	32	32.5	86,000
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	100,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	10,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	66,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	4,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	80,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	10,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.15	0.15	0.14	0.14	1,070,000

	SHARES	VALUE(P)
Bank & Fin Svc	2,724,580	105,039,050.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	316,104,430	520,124,220.00
PRO	18,319,000	66,651,880.00
Mining	462,302,000	58,346,240.00
OIL	81,160,000	746,000.00
GRAND TOTALS :	880,610,010	750,907,390.00

	AVERAGES	
Bank & Fin Svc	582.25	DOWN 1.72
Comm'l & Ind'l	3,156.42	DOWN 8.21
PRO	746.68	DOWN 9.48
Mining	3,039.86	UP 53.40
OIL	2.65	UP 0.01
SME	100.00	UNCH 0.00
All Shares Index	1,212.87	DOWN 3.65
Composite	2,004.71	DOWN 6.46

NO. OF ADVANCES: 30; NO. OF DECLINES: 35; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 50; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 115; NO. OF TRADES: 2,610

IFC approves $12.5-M loan to Megaworld

By Clarissa S. Batino

MEGAWORLD Corp. is availing itself of a fresh $12.5-million, long-term loan from International Finance Corp. for the expansion of the property firm's call center offices in Eastwood City.

IFC country manager Vipul Bhagat told reporters that the loan was scheduled for closing within the month and would be part of the $105-million portfolio for the agency's fiscal year ending June 30.

Megaworld has an existing "seven to eight year" loan with the IFC for $25 million. The funding was also poured into the Eastwood project.

Bhagat said the new facility would fall due in "close to 10 years."

Megaword chair and president Andrew Tan said the fresh financing from the IFC would be used next year to expand the 1880 Eastwood Avenue within Eastwood City.

The company is building an additional 35,000 square meters of office space for business process outsourcing or BPO companies. The IFC loan will be used to construct more BPO offices ready for occupancy by the first quarter of 2006.

"This is a reflection of our belief in the country's IT sector. We have a long-term commitment here," said the IFC chief.

CURRENCIES

June 20, 2005 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.813802083	1.000000	55.4390
Japan	Yen	0.007498	0.009214	0.5108
United Kingdom	Pound	1.489583	1.830400	101.4755
Hongkong	Dollar	0.104689	0.128642	7.1318
Switzerland	Franc	0.647365	0.795482	44.1007
Canada	Dollar	0.662058	0.813537	45.1017
Singapore	Dollar	0.487569	0.599125	33.2149
Australia	Dollar	0.632915	0.777726	43.1164
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.158741	2.652661	147.0609
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.217008	0.266660	14.7834
Brunei	Dollar	0.486113	0.597336	33.1157
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000085	0.000104	0.0058
Thailand	Baht	0.01981	0.024343	1.3496
UAE	Dirham	0.221576	0.272272	15.0945
Euro	Euro	1	1.228800	68.1234
ArgentinaPeso	0.283555	0.348432	19.3167	
Denmark	Kroner	0.134282	0.165006	9.1478
India	Rupee	0.018708	0.022989	1.2745
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.214187	0.263193	14.5912
Mexico	New Peso	0.075282	0.092507	5.1285
New Zealand	Dollar	0.58358	0.717103	39.7555
South Africa	Rand	0.122505	0.150534	8.3455
Korea	Won	0.000806	0.000991	0.0549
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.025988	0.031934	1.7704

Shares close . . .

From page B1

Dealers said investors cashed in on recent gains, using political concerns sparked by vote rigging and corruption allegations against President Gloria Arroyo and her family as the excuse.

"Investors are looking for signs on how the ongoing political sideshow will turn out. Notwithstanding, our sense is that the market is not particularly concerned about the issues but rather irritated by it," said Jose Vistan of AB Capital Securities.

"The stock market is a barometer of how the economy would perform six months ahead. (Current trading) suggests that if we weather the storm, things will get better," Jonathan Ravelas of Banco De Oro Universal Bank. *AFP*

DISCLOSURES

KUOK Philippine Properties Inc. elected as directors Edward Kuok Khoon Long, Tomas Zita Jr., Vicente Formoso, Cynthia Del Castillo, Johnny Cobankiat, Antonio Cojuangco, George Go, Alfredo Ramos and Wilfred Uytengsu Sr. It reappointed Sycip, Gorres, Velayo & Co. as external auditor.

* * *

EDSA Properties Holdings Inc. elected as directors Edward Kuok Khoon Long, Tomas Zita Jr., Danila Regina Fojas, Ho Shut Kan, Vicente Formoso, Kin Sun Ng, Federico Noel Jr., Cynthia Del Castillo, Maximo Licauco III, Alfredo Ramos and Augusto Sunico. It reappointed Joaquin Cunanan & Co. as external auditor.

* * *

FILINVEST Development Corp. executed with its subsidiary Filinvest Land Inc. and the International Finance Corp. an Omnibus Financing Agreement covering FLI's P2.25-billion loan from IFC.

* * *

WISE Holdings Inc. reset the date of the annual regular stockholders' meeting from July 25 to Dec. 15.

* * *

ABOITIZ Transport System Corp. elected as directors Jon Ramon Aboitiz, Enrique Aboitiz Jr., Roberto Aboitiz, Erramon Aboitiz, Bob Gothong, Justo Ortiz, Sabin Aboitiz, Washington Sycip and Aloysius Colayco. It also increased its authorized capital stock to P4,074,908,000 divided into 4 billion common shares and 74,908,000 redeemable preferred shares, both with a par value of P1 per share. *Compiled by Cyril L. Bonabente, PDI Research*

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Awards: August 2004 By Xiao Ming Wu 21/6/2004

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Dale Thompson, Senior Immigration Consultant, will host FREE 60-minute informal briefings to be held at Suite 1207, 12th Floor MCS Tower, Makati Cinema Square, Pasong Tamo, Makati City on the following dates:

Thursday, June 23 at 6:30 p.m.
Saturday, June 25 at 10:30 a.m.

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Father's Day

MR. BEARBULL

Ron Nathan

LAST Sunday was Father's Day and my daughter gave me a card that read:

I have a loving Daddy
He's known as Mr. Bearbull.
Mummy also loves him
But thinks his jokes are terrible.
It is not perfect, but I have seen verse.

We cannot continue to have the tape discussed for the next three months lest it frightens away investors.

So I sent it to the world-famous detective, Sherlock Holmes, and this was his reply. "My dear Mr. Bearbull, that cannot be your real name so it is obviously a pseudonym. Obviously, you are an illegal alien and probably a friend of Dr. Moriarty. I have examined the tape and a slight cut obscured two syllables. The lady in question was addressing a man named Gary, and from his deferential demeanor, she is obviously of higher rank.

She intimated that she wanted to be Top of the Pops, so obviously the man is Gary Valenciano and she is asking whether they are likely to get back together again. It is an innocent question with no political significance."

After receiving a reply in some obscure language unknown to me, she said Gary, merci, which is French for thank you.

Unfortunately, the missing syllables "y" and "mer" were deleted, so it came out as Garci.

In another part of the tape, she asks whether Gary is smoking a cigar. He replies, "Ma'am, I am smoking a cigar, si."

Again the last two syllables form the word "garci."

I am sorry to inform you that my dear friend, Dr. Watson, passed away but his name lingers on in Windows 98.

I, too, am getting old, and the government is putting me in one of the Holmes for the Aged. As soon as your eyes lose their focus, they put you in an old focus home. As you know, I play the fiddle and as there are a lot of fiddlers in your country, perhaps you could get me a job in the foul harmonic orchestra. Yours respectfully, Sherlock.

I have very little to write as my last article was only three trading days ago.

Whenever GMA declares Monday a holiday, I cannot get my article typed until Tuesday so that it appears on Wednesday, one day late.

Last week, she declared a holiday the day after Mother's Day, and she was planning to do the same with Father's Day.

However, the Society for the Supremacy of Women vetoed it, so she declared Friday a holiday instead.

Buy zone

Last week, I wrote that the PHISIX was close to the BUY zone and the index went up every day as foreign brokers continued to buy our stocks and sell the peso.

This is an unusual scenario, but the money that flows into the stock market is "hot money."

It can be removed in a few days if required, so it does not necessarily imply long-term confidence. It can just be short-term speculation.

The index touched the SELL zone on Friday so it should correct soon.

Most of the money went into the telecom twins, and TEL soared to P1,645 before closing, about P100 higher at P1,615.

The CFO said that profits would exceed last year's figure of P27 billion even without nonrecurring gains.

He also said that the debt would be reduced to $1 billion by 2006, and that as the debt was paid off, thanks to huge dividends from SMART, the pay out would increase progressively from 30 percent to 60 percent.

First General is selling $500 million worth of 5-year bonds ahead of its IPO later this year, but the yield of 11.55 percent looks expensive, especially if accompanied by a foreign exchange loss.

The company will also be selling up to 40 percent of its equity to raise a further $300 million, and this has pushed up the price of FPH.

In the US, the trade deficit has widened to $165 billion, an all time record.

Despite this, the dollar has remained strong, as the Federal Rserve believes the economy to be growing at 3.4 percent with inflation not a serious problem at present.

The PPI, which is the cost of production, rose 0.6 percent in May but the CPI, the price at which goods are sold, fell 0.1 percent.

So inflation is not an immediate threat, but the inability for companies to pass on price increases means that their profit margins will be squeezed.

So earnings growth should continue to slow.

China's appetite

China is still growing at over 9 percent, which means that its voracious appetite for oil, steel, cement, copper and other base metals will continue.

I think oil at $60 a barrel in the next three months is a near certainty even if Opec pumps an additional 500,000 barrels a day.

One problem is that the US does not have enough refining capacity to deal with the increased inflow, and it takes many years and a great deal of money to build new refineries.

Scientists were banking on cold fusion, solar power, and fuel cells to solve the problem, but they don't seem to have made much progress in these fields.

The most important event was the NO votes of France and the Netherlands in respect of the European Constitution.

EU troubles

As all countries have to agree, the constitution is dead.

The UK no longer has to hold a referendum next year, which would have resulted in a 70-percent NO vote, to the embarrassment of Tony Blair who will shortly take over the presidency for three months.

Two years ago, I wrote that the EU would eventually disintegrate though not necessarily during my lifetime. Last year, I gave it a life span of five years and now it is in a coma (which means sleep of death). The Italians are talking about abandoning the EURO and going back to the lira.

The advantage of having a flexible currency is that you can let it depreciate if your goods are not competitive and your economy is weaker than your neighbors.

If the Philippines had pegged the peso to the dollar when it was 2.50 or even 7, gasoline would now cost more than P200 a liter, a jeepney ride would cost over P40 and a bus ride about P70.

As for imported medicine, it would cost eight times more than it does at the present. The country would have gone bankrupt a long ago.

It was only the devaluation of the peso that allowed us to survive.

The European Union now has 25 members, of which Germany and France are the most important (excluding the UK, which is not using the EURO).

Some of these countries are extremely poor, have 25-percent unemployment, and work for a pittance but as they all have EU passports, they can cross borders freely into the richer countries and work as laborers for much less than the minimum wage.

As a result, Germany and France have very high unemployment and negligible growth. The UK has by far the lowest unemployment and the highest growth rate.

I am not an economist, but you cannot put together 25 countries with economies ranging from strong to almost non-existent and then unify them with an inflexible currency and mobility of labor.

No to common currency

It cannot possibly work, and the EU is now in a state of chaos with Britain and France not talking to each other. Relations between the two countries have not been as bad since Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo.

Anybody who is contemplating an Asean bloc with the peso and rupiah pegged to the strong yen can forget it. It would be a recipe for disaster and if you include mobility of labor and the abolition of passports, can you visualize how many Filipinos would emigrate to Japan and Australia.

About half the population, I would imagine. *mrbearbull@hotmail.com*

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NTC urged to reconsider ruling on Sun's 24/7

PILIPINO Telephone Corp., a unit of Smart Communications Inc., has asked the National Telecommunications Commission to suspend Sun Cellular's 24/7 promo, or at least limit the offering within off peak hours of 11 p.m. to 6 a.m.

In a motion filed June 9 with the NTC, Piltel asked the commission to reconsider its May 23 decision allowing Digitel Mobile Phils. Inc. to keep on offering its unlimited, within-network call and text rates to its subscribers.

Piltel said the NTC order was ambiguous and contradicted the commission's earlier position. The Smart unit added that the order was unconstitutional as it would violate the provision granting equal rights to the "prior operator."

The NTC also did not resolve the issue raised by other operators that the three-year-old Sun Cellular had violated the NTC's standards on network quality. Instead, the NTC, in its ruling, proceeded to set up new rules, Piltel added.

In its May 23 order, the NTC allowed telcos to set their own standards for every innovative price offer.

The order thus effectively cancelled out a 2002 circular requiring wireless players to maintain a network quality that would connect 93 out of 100 calls on the first attempt, and would not prematurely drop 95 out of 100 calls.

Piltel and Globe Telecom Inc. claimed that Sun Cellular would only connect 38 out of 100 calls on the first attempt. They said its drop call rate was staggering, considering it automatically cuts off calls after 5 minutes.

Napoleon Nazareno, president of Piltel, Smart and Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., said that his company would just like to clarify what the NTC meant by allowing phone companies to set their own standards.

"When we invested huge sums of money into this business, the assumption is that there are certain set of standards that everybody must adhere to," said the PLDT chief in an interview. "The NTC, as a regulator, must set the standards as it had already done. This is all very confusing."

Piltel, in its petition to the NTC, said that the commission itself appeared confused when it issued the order. Piltel cited the press statement of NTC chair Ronald Solis.

"Solis said that, based on the commission's findings, it is not feasible for companies to offer unlimited text and call services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week without causing network congestion especially during the peak hours of 6 a.m. to 11 p.m.," Piltel said in a May 25 press statement.

"Without clarifying the extent of its order, the commission would be allowing mobile operators to go around the requirements of the NTC at least for the next 2 years and, thus, would defeat its own objective of demonstrating its commitment to fair and equitable competition," said Piltel in its petition.

It said the May 23 order afforded the new player "undue benefit" because it was not forced to comply with the performance standards the NTC had set.

Sun Cellular's 24/7 introduced a new pricing standard in October 2004 when it sold unlimited call and text within the network for 30 days for P350, and P100 for 7 days. The new tariff allowed the Gokongwei-owned player to grow its subscribers to 1.7 million from 700,000 in end-Sept. 2004. *Clarissa S. Batino*

Globe on a roll, launches new call and text rates

By Clarissa S. Batino

GLOBE Telecom Inc. has a lot of reasons to celebrate.

For one, the telco giant has started offering on a 30-day basis its new promo dubbed "Celebrate," which slashes calls rates by 60 percent, and text charges by half.

Ferdinand Dela Cruz, Globe wireless business group head, said the company would generate more revenue because of the new promo.

Globe shares went up P5 yesterday and closed at P830, following the National Telecommunications Commission's ruling last week that was seen to favor the telco's standing.

The regulator directed Globe competitor Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. to cut access charges to Globe. The NTC then granted Globe's petition for a nationwide local exchange franchise.

Globe is a joint venture of the Ayala Corp. and Singapore Telecom.

Under the Globe Celebrate promo, prepaid subscribers could avail themselves of lower call and text rates within the network for 30 days, or until July 11 for a registration fee of P100. The promo is not available to Touch Mobile customers.

The first minute of Globe calls would be charged P5, and each succeeding minute would be billed P2.50 as against a regular tariff of P6.50 for Globe-to-Globe calls. Text rates are slashed to 50 centavos each.

Dela Cruz said that Globe postpaid subscribers also have a reason to celebrate.

"For postpaid, we have IDD Celebrate where subscribers will be charged 20 US cents after the fourth minute of call."

Subscribers are told to text Callrate to 2870 to register for the lower voice tariffs, and Textrate to the same number to avail of the 50-percent discount on the short messaging system.

Dela Cruz said subscribers could also dial 234, plus the 10-digit mobile number, to enroll. A prepaid subscriber must have enough load to cover the cost of registration.

"While offering great value to our customers, we also feel we can manage the network impact versus previously unlimited offers, which degrade network quality significantly, based on our own experience and as we observe from the other network's experience," Dela Cruz said.

The new promo was originally scheduled for launching in mid May but was deferred.

Globe had said it would shun the unlimited pricing offer, but would instead offer rates that would give its customer better value.

"The way to go for us is not the unlimited call and text tariff," said Globe president Gerardo Ablaza. "Our experience indicates that behavior leads to a massive change in call volume that is unsustainable if we were to meet the minimum requirement on network fitness."

First Gen raises ₱5B from bond offer

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

FIRST Generation Corp. (First Gen), the holding company of the Lopez family's power generation businesses, has raised P5 billion from its bond offering, its bank underwriters said.

Underwriters added that last week's offering was the largest corporate bond debut in the country.

First Gen initially offered to investors P3.5 billion in fixed rate notes from June 14 to 17.

It later increased its offer to P5 billion, after securing the approval of the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Investors fully subscribed to the P5-billion issue, said Consuelo Garcia, ING's head of financial markets.

"It was a very challenging environment," Garcia said. "In spite of the challenges, the market remains liquid."

Demand was strong for First Gen's debt issue, despite uncertainties that have affected investor sentiment due to the recent political upheaval involving President Macapagal-Arroyo and her family.

The President had been accused of poll fraud, while her husband, son and brother-in-law had been linked to the illegal numbers racket.

"Investors can see through the smoke," said Eduardo Francisco, executive vice president for BDO Capital and Investment Corp. "People are looking for true value like First Gen."

BDO Capital joins the ING Group as lead manager. ING is the sole bookrunner for the issue.

The senior notes, due 2010, carried a coupon of 11.55 percent.

The proceeds of the offering will be used to finance First Gen's growth strategy: to acquire existing power generating companies being privatized by the government, and existing gencos that may be sold to private firms.

Part of the funds will partially finance Greenfield projects.

First Gen's notes received from PhilRatings the grade of "PRS Aaa"—the highest possible credit rating for a corporate bond issuance in the local market.

The PRS Aaa rating makes the debt notes attractive to banks and quasi-banks. The notes have also received approval from the Insurance Commission as an eligible reserve investment for insurance companies.

First Gen is also keen on making its initial public offering in the fourth quarter at the stock market, according to sources familiar with the company's activities.

First Gen has expressed its interest to list at the stock market this year and has tapped investment banks UBS Warburg, CLSA, BDO Capital and ATR Kim Eng as underwriters, sources said.

Francis Lim, PSE president, said that First Gen hopes to offer between 20 and 40 percent of new and previously-owned shares worth an estimated $300 million.

In July 2004, First Gen won the bid for the 1.6-megawatt Agusan mini-hydro plant under the PSALM privatization program. First Gen took over the plant in March 2005. First Gen controls some 1,725 megawatts of gross generation capacity.

First Gen's subsidiaries include First Gas Power Corp., which owns a 1,000-MW power plant, and FGP Corp., which runs a 500-MW gas-fired plant. Both power plants are located in Batangas province.

First Gen is 88.4 percent-owned by First Philippine Holdings. Aidec FG Power Corp. Ltd. holds a 7.75-percent stake in First Gen. Sumitomo Corp., one of the largest trading conglomerates in Japan, owns 3.81 percent of the company.

ID system for aliens now operational

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE BIOMETRIC identification system for foreigners is now fully operational, making the country more secure against the entry of unwanted aliens, according to the Department of Trade and Industry.

The program, dubbed Alien Certificate of Registration Identity Card (ACR I-Card) project is worth $2.8 million, or about P150-million. It aims to bar the unauthorized entry of foreigners into the country.

According to Trade Secretary Juan B. Santos, the ACRI I-card has been implemented with the help of the DTI's Build-Operate-Transfer Center, which provides technical assistance to the Bureau of Immigration.

The ACR I-Card project will enhance the security of immigration check points against unauthorized entry or exit of aliens by advancing the capability of the BI in identifying and tracking alien residents through an ID based card.

The contract was awarded to the J. Serrano Trading Corp. in September 2003.

In the second quarter of 2004, the project was stalled when a number of foreign business groups complained about the $50 annual fee.

Santos said the project proceeded after the BI issued a memorandum order dated Dec. 10, 2004, ordering the resumption of the project's implementation.

The BI move was in compliance with orders from the Department of Justice dated July 21 and Nov. 17, 2004, which ordered the bureau to implement the project fully and without any further delay.

The ACR I-Card to be issued has an embedded microchip with biometric security features.

The system includes the recording of biometric impressions that have unique serial numbers. The card also holds the record of basic information pertaining to the cardholder.

Incoming and outgoing foreigners will be required to insert the ACR I-Card into the readers that have been put up in air and sea ports around the country.

A foreigner in transit would then be instructed to place his or her thumb on a fingerprint reader.

The software automatically compares the live scan of the alien's fingerprint geometry with the captured image stored at the BI database. The government said the card was tamper-proof and fraud-proof.

Also, the system electronically encrypts on the card details of the foreigner's travels.

As of June 7, the BI has already put in place 49 counters that will process the ACR I-Cards of alien cardholders entering and leaving the country.

Of the 17,923 applications that the BI received, it has printed a total of 5,021 cards, of which 3,712 have already been claimed.

Oilink expects to pay ₱1B in taxes this year

OILINK International Corp. expects to pay at least P1 billion in taxes and customs duties this year.

Oil firms, such as Oilink, are expected to increase their tax contributions to the government with the passage of the Value Added Tax law, which imposes VAT on petroleum products starting July 1, 2005.

Oilink, located in Mariveles, Bataan, paid nearly P1 billion in taxes and customs duties in 2004.

It expects to surpass the billion-peso mark this year.

The company posted gross revenue of P8.1 billion in 2004, 21 percent up from P6.7 billion the previous year. The 2004 revenues consisted mostly of retail sales of its affiliate, Unioil Petroleum Philippines Inc., and several independent players.

Despite the increase in revenue, the company's margin remained low due to the rising cost of crude and the inability of local oil firms to reflect the full additional costs in their prices.

With a more stable oil price and foreign exchange rate, the company managed to improve its performance in the first quarter of the year.

Oilink imports refined petroleum products from various refineries in the Asia-Pacific region.

These refineries are bigger and are equipped to produce superior products that exceed the Clean Air Act (CAA) compliance set by the government.

The company's terminal has a capacity to store about one million barrels of crude oil.

5-month budget deficit stays . . .

From page B1

enue, the biggest revenue contributor among all government agencies, collected P221.4 billion in the first five months of the year, or 14.6 percent higher than the year-ago figure. The Bureau of Customs, the second-biggest revenue earner, also improved its revenue collection during the period, contributing P55.8 billion to the national government's coffers. The BOC's five-month revenue collection was 15.1 percent higher than the figure recorded in the same period last year.

The DOF, head agency of the BIR and the BOC, attributed the improving revenue collection of the government to administrative measures like the strengthened campaign against tax evasion and smuggling, and stricter monitoring of tax and duty remittances.

In April, the national government posted a monthly budget surplus of P3.3 billion, the first time in four years that it recorded a one-month surplus.

The DOF also said legislative measures like the recent passage of the value-added tax bill, would bring down the deficit figure to lower than the target of P180 billion. Assistant Finance Secretary Gil Beltran said the deficit was likely to hit only P151 billion for 2005.

The VAT law, which is scheduled to be implemented in July, is estimated to generate P28 billion in additional revenues for the remaining part of the year, and as much as P105 billion annually staring 2006.

The law expanded the coverage of the tax and gave the President the standby authority to raise the VAT rate from 10 to 12 percent next year.

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Top officials to speak at Cebu ICT 2005

TOP GOVERNMENT officials are slated to speak at the Cebu ICT 2005, a three-day international conference and exhibition, focusing on information and communications technology (ICT), and IT-enabled services (ITES).

The conference is intended to project Cebu as an important Asian ICT and ITES hub, according to the event organizers.

President Macapagal-Arroyo will keynote the conference, which begins June 22.

Secretary Juan B. Santos of the Department of Trade and Industry and Sen. Manuel A. Roxas II, chair of the Committee on Economic Affairs and the Committee on Trade and Commerce, will be the speakers.

The other government speakers are Virgilio Peña, Commission on ICT chair, Damien Mapa, CICT commissioner, Gwendolyn Garcia, Cebu governor, and Tomas Osmeña, Cebu City mayor.

Cebu ICT 2005 will feature over 100 exhibitors, and is expected to draw up to 1,000 delegates from Asia, the Americas and Europe.

For more information on Cebu ICT 2005, visit www.cebuict2005.com.

UST formally opens accountancy college

THE UNIVERSITY of Santo Tomas will formally open the UST-Alfredo M. Velayo College of Accountancy today, with Fr. Tamerlane R. Lana, OP, Rector, leading the UST officials.

The UST Alfredo M. Velayo College of Accountancy will operate as the 18th college of UST.

Starting June of this year, the accountancy course would no longer be part of the College of Commerce.

The College of Accountancy's first dean is Jose M. Ireneo.

The college is named after one of its illustrious alumni, Alfredo M. Velayo, who graduated summa cum laude from the College of Commerce in 1940.

He placed fourth in the CPA licensure examinations given in the same year.

He co-founded SyCip, Gorres and Velayo in 1946, the country's top accounting firm.

The creation of a separate College of Accountancy is the initial project of the UST College of Commerce Alumni Foundation Inc. endowment campaign called "Rekindling the Thomasian Spirit ... Onwards to 2011."

The campaign aims to benefit the College of Accountancy and transform it into a Center of Excellence by 2011, the year UST celebrates its 400th foundation.

CHED, Asian Eye Institute tie-up for optometrist's program

THE COMMISSION on Higher Education (CHED), in its desire to help millions of Filipinos suffering from low vision and provide for better educational training of Filipino optometrists, recently signed a Memorandum of Agreement with Asian Eye Institute (AEI), one of the most respected eye care centers in Asia, to design and implement a faculty development program for eleven optometry schools nationwide.

CHED tapped AEI for its expertise and most up-to-date technology on contact lenses and low vision. The month-long training program, dubbed as Optometry Faculty Development Program on Contact Lenses and Vision Rehabilitation started on May 2. The lectures and clinical workshop are ongoing at the Asian Eye Institute, 9th Floor, Phinma Bldg. Rockwell Center, Makati City and is headed by AEI's chief optometrist and contact lens and low vision specialist Dr. Jesse B. Caguioa.

The program has two modules. The clinical training module on cornea and contact lenses will address current issues in diagnosis and management of contact lenses and its related ocular problems, contact lens fitting, design and manufacturing, contact lens solutions and lubricants. "This module is designed to provide optometric educators with a holistic view of the management of refractive problems and will include special topics on laser vision correction and other forms of refractive surgery options in managing refractive errors," says Dr. Caguioa. "It definitely goes beyond contact lens prescription," he quickly adds.

The second training module covers Low Vision Rehabilitation, an aspect of eye care generally not well-known in the country. Low Vision is due to ocular disorders such as age-related macular degeneration, glaucoma, diabetic retinopathy, retinitis pigmentosa, and diseases of the cornea, among others. These disorders lead to vision impairment that affects an individual's ability to read, write, sign documents, use the computer, travel, and other activities.

"The training on Low Vision will be holistic to provide participants with knowledge in the clinical care of ocular disorders that causes low vision problems and new approaches in assessing and rehabilitating patients with functional vision impairment," Dr. Caguioa reveals.

Participants, he says, will learn the latest in low vision devices, techniques in training low vision patients, the psychological and economic impact of low vision problems on patients and families, and the epidemiology of low vision problems across the globe. In addition, the seminar will also tackle the social issues in the delivery of care for low vision patients, the role of non-governmental organizations in Low Vision Rehabilitation, and coordination and integration of the delivery of services with allied professionals involved in occupational rehabilitative care, social work, and counseling.

Dr. Robert Edward Ang will assist and conduct the two-week module on cornea and contact lenses, while Dr. Amadeo A.S. Veloso Jr., will take on the module for low vision and visual rehabilitation. These doctors are also from the Asian Eye Institute.

RUSTAN'S, SAMSUNG'S ALLIANCE OF TECH STYLE

The metro's premier lifestlye hub, Rustan's, teams with eletronics giant Samsung to present the Men's Month this June, conceivably the largest fashion event of the season to combine men's couture with those other male necessities - phones, gadgets and other digital gizmos. To solidify the cooperation between the two industry players, a MOA signing was held at the Samsung head office along Ortigas Avenue last May 20. Present at the venue were Samsung CEO Hyuck Jae Shim, vice president for ICT Maeng Dal Bae and Pen Roque, chief communications - chief country representative, Rustan's VP for marketing communications Joel Tantoco, and advertising manager Lovinnia Gotao and Creative Concepts president Vince Tanjutco. The teaming of a lifestyle and fashion retailer and electronics manufacturer marks a historic first in the country, and big things are to be expected this Men's Month. Planned for June 30 is a technophile's dream - a summit that brings to the forefront the gadgets and automobiles found in the pages of C! and Evo Magazines while putting on display the hottest products from Samsung. Concluding the summit on July 5 is a fashion showcase that unveils R Men, the Rustan's men's magalogue and brings the most exclusive men's brands from Rustan's together with Samsung's latest hand-held wonders. On both events, look forward to an intense audio-visual experience making this the perfect marriage of fashion and cutting-edge electronics. This alliance proves that Rustan's and Samsung are here to make June a truly unrivaled Men's Month. Shown are (standing, from left) Lovinnia Gotao, Angie Limbaco, Vince Tanjutco, Pen Roque, (seated, from left) Maeng Dal Bae, Hyuck Jae Shim, Joel Tantoco, Annaise Fragrante.

HUGE TURN-OUT IN MCDONALD'S KIDDIE CREW GRADUATION IN STARCITY

Just recently, over 10,000 children came in droves with their families to attend McDonald's Kiddie Crew graduation ceremonies held at Aliw Theatre in StarCity, Roxas Boulevard, Metro Manila. Every summer each year, McDonald's conducts kiddie crew workshop all over the country to help instill in kids the value of work at an early age. McDonald's is the country's premier family fastfood restaurant which has has over 240 branches nationwide and is still growing.

Globe introduces the Sony Ericsson P910i with BlackBerry Connect

GLOBE Telecom, Sony Ericsson Mobile Communications and Research In Motion announced the availability of BlackBerry Connect for the Sony Ericsson P910i to Globe Telecom customers in the Philippines.

BlackBerry Connect enables users of the P910i to connect to proven and popular BlackBerry services featuring push-based wireless technology. BlackBerry provides an efficient and reliable communications platform that automatically delivers e-mails and data to and from a wireless device. The Sony Ericsson P910i will support BlackBerry services, while maintaining the existing P910i experience and functionality.

"We're delighted to add BlackBerry Connect to the Sony Ericsson P910i. The P910i offers productivity, entertainment and communications in a stylish and compact device. With our partnerships with Globe and RIM, we ensure our customers are able to access this proven, market-leading wireless communication and data solution," said Dennis Manzano, Sony Ericsson general manager.

"BlackBerry has been well-received by Globe's customers since it was launched last year. We are very pleased to work with Sony Ericsson and RIM to offer a new choice to our customers who would like to have BlackBerry services in a different form factor. Our customers can also leverage Globe's robust GPRS network and strong international roaming capabilities to access emails and corporate data anywhere they go," said Blue de Venecia, GlobeSolutions senior product manager.

With BlackBerry Connect technology, users will enjoy BlackBerry services on the Sony Ericsson P910i. Supported features include "Push"-based wireless email access, wireless e-mail reconciliation and attachment viewing via BlackBerry Enterprise Server and BlackBerry Internet Service. Additional features supported by BlackBerry Enterprise Server include wireless calendar reconciliation, remote address lookup, IT policy enforcement and commands and Triple DES encryption.

"Customers around the world depend on the push-based BlackBerry architecture and infrastructure to remain connected to business and personal information while on the go," said Mark Guibert, vice president, corporate marketing at Research In Motion. "With BlackBerry Connect, Globe's customers will be able to enjoy the many features of the Sony Ericsson P910i together with the added benefit of BlackBerry connectivity."

The P910i is a high-quality communications tool for voice calls, text and picture messaging, and email, as well as providing full PDA/organizer functions. In addition, it is a camera-phone capable of recording video and still images and provides a good gaming experience on the 262K color touchscreen. The wide range of applications available for download enables the P910i to do much more than making voice calls, thereby increasing its value for both consumers and operators. The P910i is based on the open Symbian OS v7.0 and the established UIQ user interface.

BlackBerry Enterprise Server software tightly integrates with Microsoft Exchange and IBM Lotus Domino and works with existing enterprise systems to enable secure, push-based wireless access to e-mail and other corporate data.

For individuals and smaller businesses, BlackBerry Internet Service allows users to access up to ten corporate and/or personal e-mail accounts (including Microsoft Exchange, IBM Lotus Domino and many popular ISP email accounts) from a single device.

JPSTD, JPMAP SENIOR STUDENTS WORKSHOP

More than one hundred graduating students from four universities, three of them in Metro Manila recently underwent a one-day seminar workshop held at the country's premier development center, Meralco Management and Leadership Development Center (MMLDC) Foundation in Antipolo City. The workshop held on two different occasions, aims to equip students with a better understanding of their transition from academic to professional life and prepare them for their chosen careers. The workshop has been made possible in partnership with the Junior Philippine Society for Training and Development (JPSTD), Junior Philippine Management Association of the Philippines (JPMAP) and Jobstreet.com, an Internet-based device for job seekers. Three experts in the professional field: Arthur Luis Florentin, Dr. Eduardo Ong and Rose Penalba shared their wealth of experience with the senior students. MMLDC Foundation Inc is an ISO 9001:2000 certified center which offers scholarship programs to identified beneficiaries, such as electric cooperatives, public school teachers, administrators and students.

Bits & Clips

Nina at Suburbia Manila

THIS June, Suburbia Manila gears up to more exciting events and top-notch entertainment as it treats night owls to a special show featuring Nina. The upcoming one night engagement titled "Nina… The Soul Siren at Suburbia" will happen on Thursday, June 23 at 930 p.m. Listen to Nina perform live the current radio and TV airtime favorite "Love Moves in Mysterious Ways" and the carrier single in her 19-track "Nina Live!" latest album. Plus expect equally good music entertainment at Suburbia Manila with King and Rush alternating with Keystone every Thursdays; Fridays are exciting with Nyoy Volante & Mannos back to back with new wave band Mighty; with of course all male group Wiseguys every Saturdays. Visit Suburbia Bar in Adriatico Street, Malate open nightly Mondays to Saturdays from 6 p.m. to 3 a.m. with a minimum consumable charge of P300. Contact Suburbia Bar Manila at tel. nos. 450-1685 or 811-0725 for special events or reservations.

AIM offers Pre-MBA

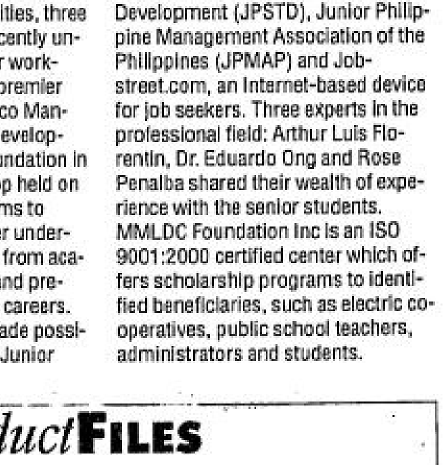
THE ASIAN Institute of Management-W. SyCip Graduate School of Business is inviting participants to its annual Pre-MBA Program at the AIM Campus on June 20 to July 8. The Pre-MBA is a three-week, highly intensive simulation course originally designed as a preparatory program for enrollees of AIM's full-time MBA. As part of the Institute's desire to cater to a greater number of high-caliber individuals, the Pre-MBA is now open to professionals and entrepreneurs from all fields, with or without a management background. The program covers Accounting for Non-Accountants, Basic Finance, Numeracy, Critical Thinking, and Study and Communication Skills. Participants will undergo 15 eight-hour days of rigorous study and interactive class discussions, complete with case studies and group projects. Classes will be handled by some of AIM's top professors with decades of professional and academic experience. For more information on the Pre-MBA and other management degree programs of AIM, call Edythe Bautista at 894-0043 or 892-4011 ext. 209 or 231.

Makati Med art exhibit

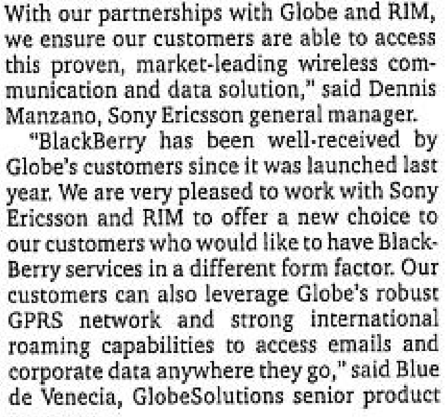
IN SPITE of the busy schedule treating their patients, doctors found time to do the things they feel would express their innermost thoughts and released the stress brought about by their work through painting and photography. On the occasion of its 36th Foundation Day, Makati Medical Center (MMC) showcased the artworks of its medical staff and employees in a photo and painting exhibit entitled "Larawan ng Sining" last May 30, at the hospital's lobby.

ProductFILES

New treats from Champola



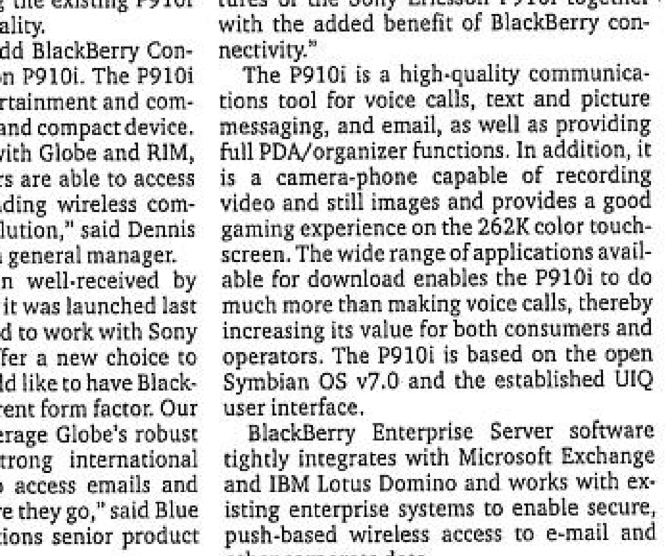
GO CRAZY over the chocolaty goodness of Champola King Cone and Chocolate Cup. Creamy chocolate with just the right amount of sweetness oozing down your mouth bursting with so much flavor that you wont be able to stop eating. Grab a piece of the King Cone and savor scrumptious chocolate wrapped in a crisp wafer cone. It is one gigantic delight. Munch down on yummy chocolate in cute cupcake shapes; Chocolate Cup is an irresistible treat for people of all ages. Champola King Cone and Chocolate Cup are available at all groceries and supermarket nationwide.



ALAXAN ALIS ARAY SA BARANGAY FREE CLINIC

Dr. Bablyin Drilon (right), a government physician and internal medicine specialist in Bacolod City, treats a patient during the Alaxan Alis Aray free clinic recently held in Barangay Villamonte and Barangay Handumanan. Alis Aray sa Barangay, a project of Unilab Consumer Health, serves hundreds of people in poor communities nationwide. Alaxan is a widely prescribed medicine for body pains.

ASIATRUST CLIENT BIG MAMA GETS SPECIAL CITATION



Asiatrust Bank (ATB) client Big Mama & Co Inc, recently received a special citation during Land Bank's Countryside and Agricultural Loan Fund Awarding Ceremony. Big Mama, supplier of reasonably priced quality meat products, was awarded for its impressive growth in resources from a small to medium-sized company in a short span of time. The company was also cited for its socio-economic impact through employment generation and its invaluable contribution in protecting the environment. Present during the awarding were (from left): LBP SEVP Institutional banking and subsidiaries sector head Alfonso Cruz Jr, BSP OIC Amando Tetangco Jr, Department of Finance Undersecretary Gabriel Singson Jr, Big Mama president Myrna Galicia and corporate secretary Felicisimo Galicia.

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LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late Enrique Z. Clemente was extrajudicially settled among his heirs as per Doc. No. 218, Page No. 44, Book No. V, Series of 2005 of Notary Public Anthony T. Co of Muntinlupa City (PDI-June 21, 28, July 5, 2005)

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Republic of the Philippines
Department of Transportation & Communication
LAND TRANSPORTATION FRANCHISING &
REGULATORY BOARD

ANNOUNCEMENT

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) is inviting interested Insurance Companies/Alliances/Associations/Groups of Insurance Companies to participate under the LTFRB Passenger Personal Accident Insurance Program (PPAIP) on a Joint Undertaking Basis.

Interested parties who wish to participate may submit their Letter/s of Intent, Sealed Proposals and Insurance Group Profile to Insurance Monitoring and Review Committee (IMRC), LTFRB.

The Project's Terms of Reference (TOR) will be available only to prospective bidders and can be purchased upon payment of a non-refundable amount of Fifty Thousand (P50,000.00) Pesos for each TOR payable to LTFRB in cash or Managers Check.

The schedule of IMRC activities is as follows:

IMRC ACTIVITIES		SCHEDULE
1.	Issuance of Projects TOR	June 21 – 24, 2005
2.	Pre-bid Conference	June 27, 2005 – 10:00 A.M. Conference Room
3.	Submission of Bids and Opening of Bids	July 4, 2005 – 10:00 AM
4.	Bid Evaluation & Assessment	July 4 – 13, 2005
5.	Notice of Award	July 15, 2005

The Project's Terms of Reference (TOR) can be secured from IMRC Secretariat on the date stipulated between 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Kindly *look for Ms. Lina Tiu* at Administrative Division, 3/F LTFRB Building, East Avenue, Quezon City or call telephone No. 426-2501.

Submission of Bids and Opening of Bids will be held at the Board's Conference Room, 3/F LTFRB Annex Building, East Avenue, Quezon City. Deadline for submission of bids will be on July 4, 2005 at 10:00 a.m. Reckoning Time will be based on the clock at the Office of the Chairperson and Board Members.

The IMRC has the right to accept or reject any bid.

The IMRC assumes no responsibility whatever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid

(Sgd.) ATTY. GONZALO S. GO, JR.
IMRC Chairman

(PDI – June 21, 2005)

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Eugenia Suarez Atienza

December 3, 1910 - June 22, 1995
Wife of General Rigoberto J. Atienza (†)

Her children Zenaida and David Clymer,Eloisa and Victor Lim, Herminia Atienza-Ilano, Rosalinda and Balbino Hernando, Rolando and Cecilia Atienza, and Josefina Atienza-Salvaña, grandchildren and great-grandchildren invite relatives and friends and readers to remember her in their prayers and to join in the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass on Wednesday, June 22, 2005 at 6:30 a.m. at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Chapel, Camp General Rigoberto J. Atienza, Libis, Quezon City, and at 9:00 a.m. at graveside at the Libingan ng mga Bayani, Fort Bonifacio, Makati City.

O Sacred Heart, o Love Divine
Make our love so like to Thine.

"...absent from the body to be present with the Lord."

— 2 Corinthians 5:8

VICENTE L. MARCIA

Peacefully joined our Creator on June 19, 2005
at the age of 74.

His bereaved wife, **Rebecca**; children and children-in-law **Heidi & Tochie Valdes**, **Jose & Jam**, **Margie & Wes Lava**, **Patty**; father **Pedro Marcia**; sister & sister-in-law **Nene & Joe Ruby**, brother & brothers-in-law **Rodolfo & Auring**, **Eduardo & Caring**, **Victorino & Myfe**; grandchildren **Maria Aurora**, **Hercules & Ulysses**, request the readers to join them in praying for his eternal happiness in heaven.

His body lies in state at the St. Peter Memorial Chapels, Inc., Quezon Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be at the Holy Cross Memorial Park, Novaliches, Quezon City after the 8:00 a.m. Mass on June 23, 2005.

Amelia Agoncillo Frial Sison

Dumalag, Capiz

March 28, 1917 – June 17, 2005

Now peacefully rests in the Grace of the Lord

Her children & children-in-law **Liborio**, **Dr. Francisco** & Vener Chavez, **Engr. Ramon** & Dr. Lilian de Jesus, **Ernesto** † and Lilian Hernandez, **Celso** & Ramona, **Dr. Milagros** & Arnold Viloria, **Atty. Mario** & Irene Lim †, **Corazon** & Stephen Lopez, adopted son Dr. Ernesto Israel; grandchildren Irene, Levi, Neil & Lizel, Liborio Jr., Andrew, Dr. Kristine & Dr. Allen Sese, Anna & Rico Espiritu, Nancy, Rex, Dr. Michelle, Jojo, Francisco, Pia, Steven, Bea, Issa, & Carlo Eric; great grandchildren Ram, & Ninna; brother Zafiro Frial, sister Renee Faeldonea; cousins, nephews & nieces, and other relatives request the readers to join them in praying for the eternal repose of her soul.

She lies in state at the Mt. Carmel Church in Roxas City until June 22, 2005 when she will be brought to the St. Martin of Tours Church in Dumalag, Capiz.

Interment will be on Saturday, June 25, 2005 at the Frial Family Mausoleum after the 2:00 p.m. Holy Mass.

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Employers set to tackle critical labor, IR issues

EMPLOYERS are set to scrutinize critical labor and industrial relations issues given local and global competition, technological advancements and rapid changes taking place in the world of work.

Topping the list to be tackled upon the initiative of the Employers Confederation of the Philippines (Ecop) are workable approaches to business and labor flexibility as well as pending bills to ban or even 'criminalize' all forms of job contracting, including outsourcing. In the present Congress, there are pending bills containing clauses which effectively make all employees regular by removing all references to non-regular types of employees.

According to Ecop President Rene Y. Soriano, employers will also review Department of Labor and Employment (Dole) Department Order 18-02 which contains a list of prohibitions on contracting and subcontracting.

"These are some of the difficult issues that need careful study in the context of policy formulation. Such study should merit the highest priority and should include recasting the present law to fit the mold that outsourcing requires," Soriano emphasized.

In addition, Soriano said Department Order 18-02 must give way to a "new regulatory framework" that is completely relevant to global trends on contracting and outsourcing and with the flexibility that would enable Philippine companies to adjust to competition as well as to create jobs.

All these will be thoroughly discussed on June 29, when employers gather at RCBC Plaza in Makati City to confront the continuing challenge to firms' dynamism and their ability to compete amid events taking shape in the global business arena.

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1. Bid Documents will be available for issuance starting June 14, 2005 to July 12, 2005 at the BAC Secretariat Office, National Transmission Corporation, Materials Management Division, Ground Floor, TransCo Main Bldg., Power Center, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City, upon payment of non-refundable fee of **Five Hundred Pesos (P500.00)** per set.
2. Deadline for submission, receipt and opening of bids shall be on or before 2:00 p.m of July 13, 2005 at the Admin Conference Room, Ground Floor, TransCo Main Bldg., Power Center, Quezon Ave. corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City. If the date is declared non-working day, the new deadline for submission shall be announced through a Bid Bulletin. Submission of documents must be clear, legible and readable. Late submission and/or incomplete application shall not be accepted.
3. Pre-bid conference will be held on July 1, 2005 at 2:00 p.m. at the Admin Conference Room, Ground Floor, TransCo Main Bldg., Power Center, Quezon Ave. corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City.
4. All particulars relative to the eligibility, bidding, evaluation of bids and award of contract shall be governed by the Implementing Rules and Regulations-A of Republic Act 9184.
5. TransCo reserves the right to reject any Application for Eligibility or all bids without offering any reasons, waive any required formality therein, and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the government.
6. Additional information shall be furnished upon request. All communications should be addressed to the undersigned at the aforementioned address.

(Sgd.) ARMANDO N. OCHOA
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI - June 14 & 21, 2005)

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'OBSTACLE TO INVESTMENTS'

Foreign chambers score Naia 3 delay

By Ronnel W. Domingo

FOREIGN business groups have urged Malacañang to muster political will to complete the Ninoy Aquino International Airport's Terminal 3, after the government moved the expected date of its opening by six months to the end of the year.

In a letter to President Macapagal-Arroyo dated June 17, the Joint Foreign Chambers of Commerce in the Philippines said the delay was the "largest obstacle to attracting foreign investment capital to the Philippines—particularly in respect of much needed infrastructure projects."

The group added that there was "minimal indication of any real progress" after more than five months since the government took over the project.

The JFC groups the following chambers of commerce: American, Australia-New Zealand, Canadian, European, Japanese and Korean.

A seventh member is the Philippine Association of Multinational Companies Regional Headquarters.

The JFC urged Malacañang to resolve the matter "by taking decisive measures through all available commercial, legal and political means."

"We firmly believe that if political will is present, an acceptable solution can be quickly found," it said.

Last Jan. 4, the Pasay City Regional Trial Court Judge ordered the government to pay Philippine International Air Terminals Co. $62.3 million for the expropriation of the Naia 3.

The court was acting on the petition of the Office of the Solicitor General filed in December 2004, seeking for expropriation in a bid to have the facility working at the soonest time possible.

Then Trade Secretary Cesar V. Purisima said that through expropriation, the government hoped to open the facility early in 2005 as well as break the impasse on the negotiations with Piatco. .

But on Jan. 14, the Supreme Court-acting on an OSG petition, which complained about the compensation amount—issued a temporary restraining order on the Pasay RTC decision "until further orders."

Last Friday, the Joint Foreign Chambers said it accepted the decision of the government at that time on conditions that: Naia 3 would be opened as soon as possible; that fair and just compensation of the investors is to be expedited; and that the verdicts of the ongoing arbitration cases in Washington and Singapore would be accepted.

Earlier this month, however, Transportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza said that Naia 3 would not open this month as was hoped for, but "before the end of the year."

According to the report, Mendoza said the Japanese sub-contractor Takenaka Corp. had signed the final terms of the contract to finish the project.

Last Friday, the JFC told Ms Arroyo that even if the government were to sign today an agreement with Takenaka or another international or local contractor to complete the airport, it was unlikely to be ready within the next 12 to 18 months.

Further, JFC said the investors-which include German firm Fraport AG—have not been compensated.

"If the government had a plan at the time of the expropriation, it would appear that this has not been effectively implemented," the JFC said.

The Naia 3 started in 1994 as an unsolicited build-operate-transfer project to be undertaken by Asian Emerging Dragon Corp.

In July 1997, the concession agreement was awarded to Philippine International Air Terminals Co., which groups Pair Cargo, Philippine Air and Ground Services Inc. and the German firm, Fraport AG.

The Supreme Court ruled in May 2003 that all five contracts related to the Terminal 3 project were void as they were contrary to public policy and violated the Build-Operate-Transfer law.

Ownership of Naia 3 is under arbitration with the International Center for Settlement of Investment Disputes in Washington D.C. and with the International Chamber of Commerce in Singapore.

Fraport filed a recovery case at $425 million before the ICSID, while Piatco filed a similar claim at $500 million before the ICC.

In turn, the government filed a counter claim at $900 million before the ICC.

Napocor eyes power from sugar mills

By Abigail L. Ho

IN LINE with efforts to curb the use of oil-fired power plants, the National Power Corp. plans to use steam coming from sugar mills to generate electricity.

Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla said in a recent interview that as much as 20 percent of the steam from sugar production just goes to waste, when it can be put to better use, such as power generation.

During the sugar milling season, he said steam produced by the plants could actually generate an average of between two and five megawatts (MW) of electricity.

Maximizing the use of steam from sugar mills in Negros, Panay and other areas in the country would not only help augment power supply, but also ease the country's dependence on imported oil for power production, he said.

"This remains an untapped source of renewable energy for the country. In the following months, we will be announcing initiatives in this particular area," he told reporters.

He said Napocor was very receptive to the idea of harnessing this new energy source, as it would gradually reduce use of expensive diesel-run and bunker fuel-fired power generation facilities.

Napocor sees up to P5.9 billion in savings from reducing its use of oil-based power plants.

The state firm has been gradually reducing power production from oil-fired plants in favor of coal-fired, geothermal and hydroelectric power plants.

In a presentation earlier in the year, Napocor president Cyril Del Callar said the state firm last year saved P3.4 billion from the continued implementation of economic load dispatching.

This was almost four times the 2003 savings of P854 million.

Economic load dispatching means meeting power demand using available generating units at the least possible cost.

This may mean dispatching power from plants that use cheaper fuel at certain points during the day to help lessen operating costs.

World oil prices have been on the rise these past several months, prompting Napocor to rely more on power generation facilities that used other types of fuel.

Del Callar said 2004 was a difficult year for the state firm, particularly in terms of fuel costs.

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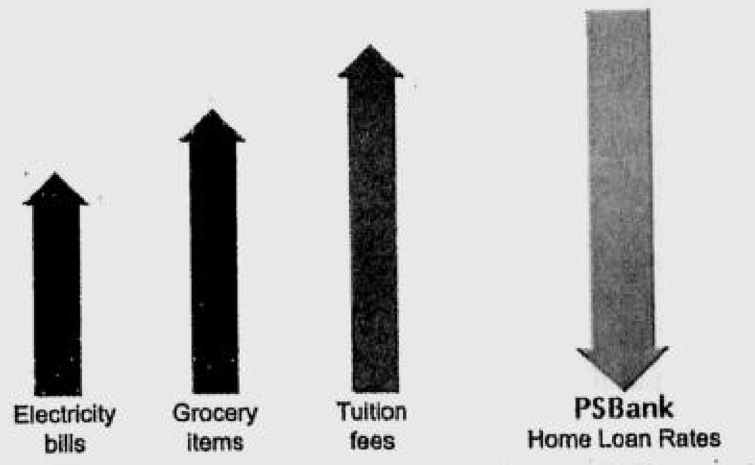

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FACTS about fat
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LIFESTYLE

Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso

MONDAY ARTS & BOOKS ● TUESDAY FITNESS ● WEDNESDAY 2BU ● THURSDAY FOOD ● FRIDAY FASHION & BEAUTY

Coffee, tea or me?

The Chinese's favorite brew has medicinal value

INSIDE OUT

Cory Quirino

WHEN you are presented with these choices, it is best to consider tea.

Tea = health. But not all teas are the same. While there are many varieties of tea, there is only one plant—*Camellia sinensis*. Variations in processing account for different tea varieties.

Common teas

Green—The lightest or palest in color, it comes in shades of green or yellow. Leaves are picked and very lightly processed, allowing auto-oxidation to take place catalyzed by natural enzymes. If this process is unchecked, the tea will become oolong and then black. Light steaming or gentle heat prevents this oxidation, preserving natural antioxidants in the leaves.

Black—Darker in color and stronger in flavor, the tea undergoes more processing, including auto-oxidation. This results in the reddish-brown/black color. But the process also destroys precious polyphenols present in fresh leaves. Though low in health value, black tea is the most popular, accounting for 80 percent of all tea produced and drunk in the world.

Oolong—Called "black dragon" by the Chinese, oolong is halfway between green and black teas. A newcomer, its processing was introduced only in the mid-19th century. Partially auto-oxidized, its taste is more delicate than black's but stronger than green's. The least widely used, less than 2 percent of yearly tea consumption is oolong.

Tea is cultivated in many countries, about 30. Notable producers are China, Japan, India and Sri Lanka (formerly Ceylon). At least 2.5 million tons of dried tea are produced yearly—20-percent green, 2-percent oolong and 78-percent black.

While all teas come from the same plant, there are two major varieties based on leaf size—sinensis and assamica. Sinensis leaves are 5-12 centimeters long, assamica's up to 20-cm long. Growing best in high altitudes, tea plantations are found in mountainous or jungle areas.

After three years, a tea bush is ready for harvest. If allowed to grow wild, it could reach 40 ft and live up to 50 years, some say even 100 years. Young, pubescent leaves are preferred over older ones and are best harvested by hand.

Historical hit drink

Whether green, oolong or black, tea as a healthy beverage has an impressive history. Chinese tea master Lu Yu wrote in AD 780 that tea cured headaches and other body aches, pains, depression and constipation.

Green tea dates back to more than 4,000 years ago. Its claimed benefits include:

- Increase in blood flow throughout the body
- Mental clarity
- Detoxification
- Boost in immune system
- Anti-aging, anti-fatigue
- Brighter eyes
- Improved skin tone

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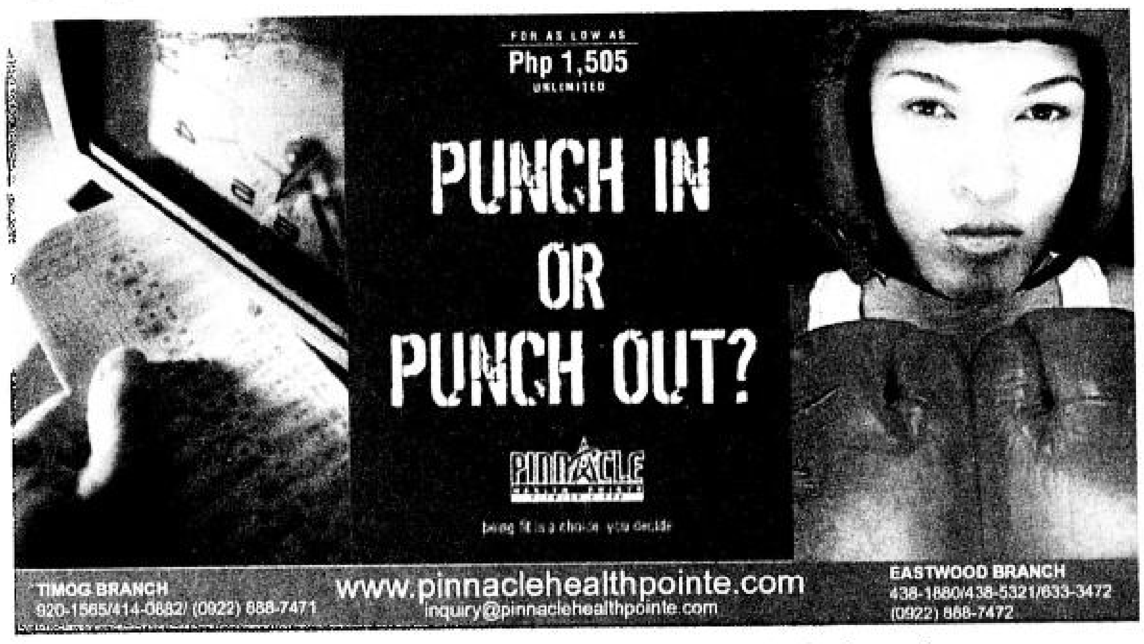

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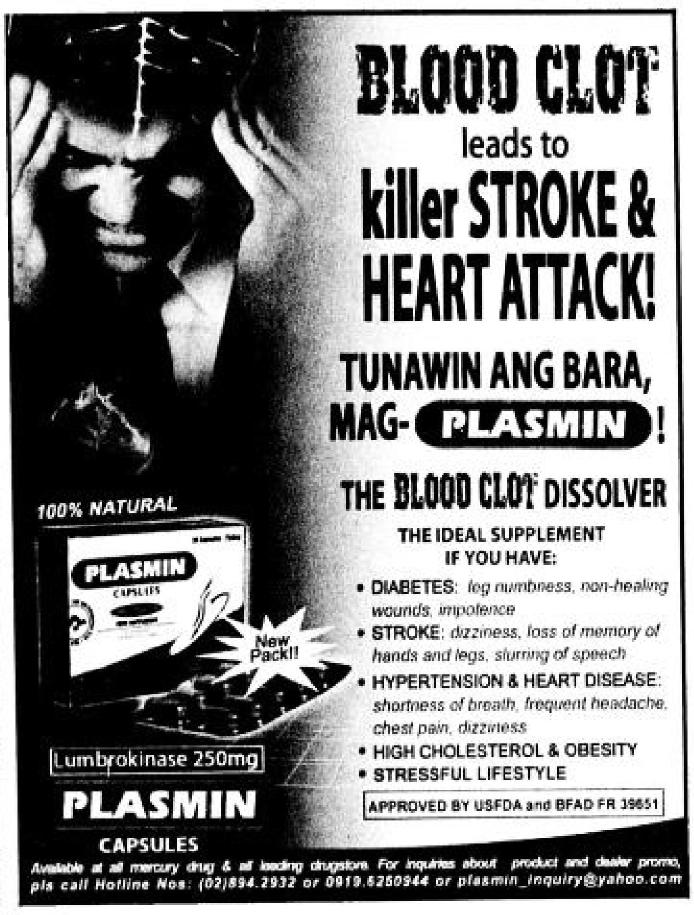

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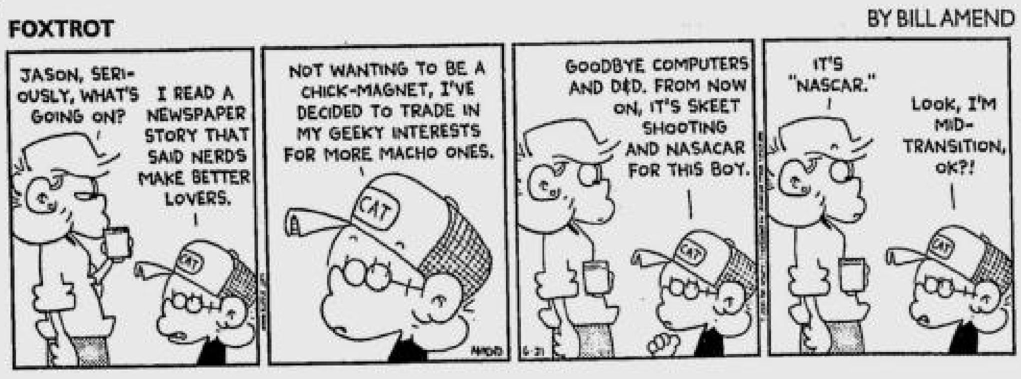
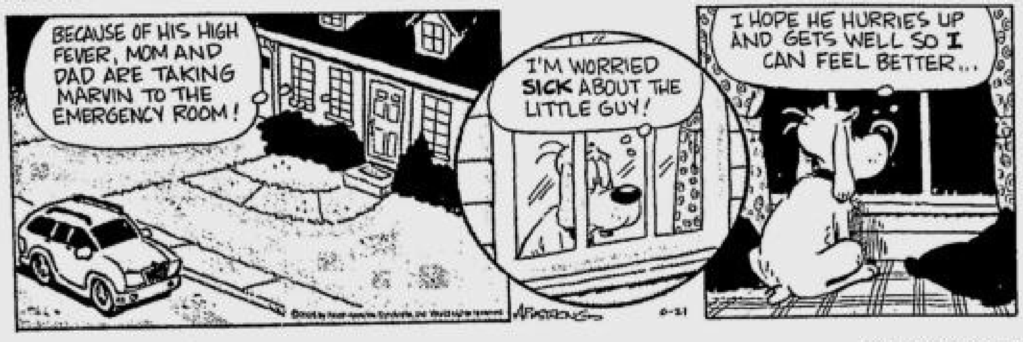
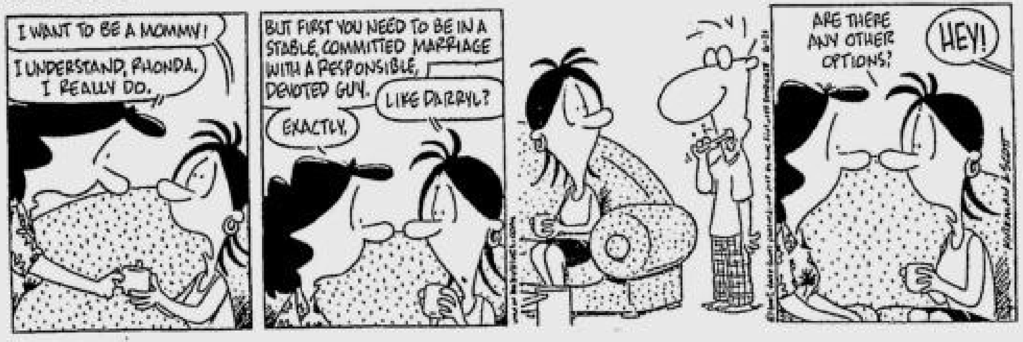

JASON, SERIOUSLY, WHAT'S GOING ON?
I READ A NEWSPAPER STORY THAT SAID NERDS MAKE BETTER LOVERS.
NOT WANTING TO BE A CHICK-MAGNET, I'VE DECIDED TO TRADE IN MY GEEKY INTERESTS FOR MORE MACHO ONES.
CAT
GOODBYE COMPUTERS AND D&D. FROM NOW ON, IT'S SKEET SHOOTING AND NASACAR FOR THIS BOY.
IT'S "NASCAR."
LOOK, I'M MID-TRANSITION, OK?!
6-21

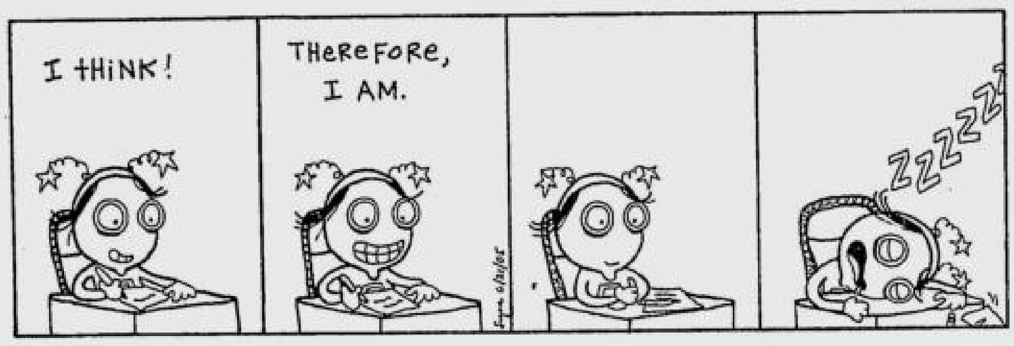
MARVIN BY TOM ARMSTRONG


BECAUSE OF HIS HIGH FEVER, MOM AND DAD ARE TAKING MARVIN TO THE EMERGENCY ROOM!
I'M WORRIED SICK ABOUT THE LITTLE GUY!
I HOPE HE HURRIES UP AND GETS WELL SO I CAN FEEL BETTER...
ARMSTRONG
6-21

BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT


I WANT TO BE A MOMMY!
I UNDERSTAND, RHONDA. I REALLY DO.
BUT FIRST YOU NEED TO BE IN A STABLE, COMMITTED MARRIAGE WITH A RESPONSIBLE, DEVOTED GUY.
LIKE DARRYL?
EXACTLY.
ARE THERE ANY OTHER OPTIONS?
HEY!

ATOMO AND WEBOY BY LYRA GARCELLANO


I THINK!
THEREFORE, I AM.
ZZZZZ

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You have a very sensuous approach to life. You want to taste, touch, smell and feel everything! You have good money skills, and will work hard for success. Your enthusiasm for life and your drive to succeed will help you overcome any obstacles. Sometimes you're a workaholic. Expect increased solitude in the year ahead to learn something important.
Birthdate of: Prince William, British royal; Mariette Hartley, actress; Ian McEwan, author.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Stay focused on home, family and domestic matters. This is where your attention should be. Talk to family members and beautify where you live.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): This is definitely a busy time for you. You've got to eat and run! You're on the go. Conversations with siblings and relatives are friendly and enjoyable.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Your focus continues to be on money and your financial situation. You might have big plans to buy something special now. You certainly want to treat yourself and loved ones.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Four planets are in your sign now (the Sun, Mercury, Venus and Saturn). This is totally empowering! People are attracted to you. It's easy to get your own way.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You definitely need increased solitude in order to rest and relax. Whatever you're doing now, it's best to work behind the scenes. Keep a low profile.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Time spent with friends, groups, clubs and organizations will be rewarding. Because you feel friendly, your popularity rating rises in the next few weeks.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): With the Sun at high noon in your chart now, you have more power and more authority. People notice you and respect you. (You might as well milk this for all it's worth.)

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Your desire to break free from restrictions and do your own thing is increasing. You want adventure! You want to know more about life and the world around you.

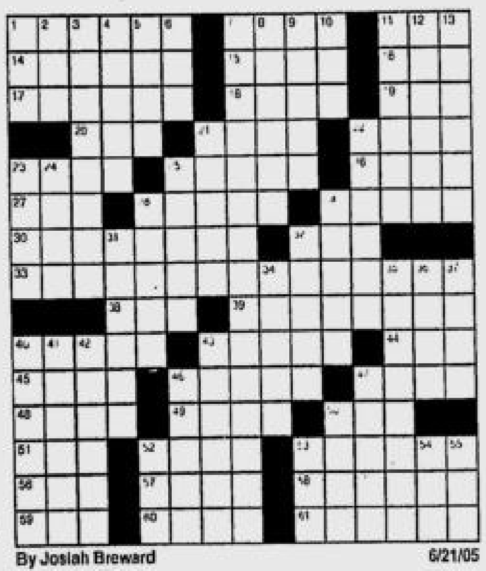
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Any research that you need to do now will go swiftly, and you will get to the bottom of things quite easily. You're eager to penetrate the truth.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): There are four planets directly opposite your sign pulling your attention to serious discussions with others. This is a good time to rehash unresolved situations with partners.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Because you have such energy now to work hard at getting better organized, give yourself permission to do this! Get on top of your scene both at home and at work.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): You feel playful and fun-loving. In the next few weeks, you want romance, pleasure, vacations, parties and enjoyable sports events. Laugh it up!

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Josiah Breward
Scranton, PA
6/21/05

ACROSS
1 Lumberjack
7 Feliciano or Ferrer
11 Beseech
14 __ borealis
15 Russian range
16 Tin Man's tool
17 Dismal
18 Points of pens
19 Open container
20 Ames and Koch
21 Banana skin
22 River deposit
23 Miller and Jillian
25 Book datum
26 Lascivious gander
27 Recently stolen
28 Pulls a gun
29 Weighty
30 In matched pairings
32 Farm enclosure
33 Summer solstice
38 Snakelike fish
39 "The __ of the Sierra Madre"
40 Bar-code swipes
43 Nolan and Meg
44 Handle clumsily
45 Related
46 Gordon and Goldblum
47 Misfortunes
48 Lethal weapons
49 Skip over
50 Magnetite or hematite
51 In addition
52 Aroma
53 Peaks
56 Travel stop
57 Chart toppers
58 Elongated
59 Blackguard
60 Bump into
61 Takes care of

DOWN
1 Young bloke
2 Sharer's pronoun
3 Herbal beverage
4 Prods
5 Goes wrong
6 Shaft of light
7 Summer solstice
8 Bay windows
9 Weasellike mammal
10 Ernie of the PGA
11 Infants
12 Banishes
13 Ruling class
21 Spinet or grand
22 Biases
23 Sailor's call
24 "And Then There Were __"
25 Fairy-tale villain
28 Medicinal portions
29 Flat-top hills
31 General directions
32 Hammer parts
34 Political payoff
35 Double housing units
36 Large inland sea
37 Trees for bows
40 Kind of electricity
41 Eclipse revelation
42 Nut that gets slivered
43 Distant
46 Foster of films
47 Dancing Castle
50 "The Andy Griffith Show" lad
52 Unit of resistance
53 Capone and Smith
54 Have dinner
55 Overflow letters

Monday's Puzzle Solved

S	C	A	M		A	N	G	S	T		I	F	F	Y
A	R	L	O		R	A	R	E	R		S	O	L	E
M	O	O	G		G	H	A	N	A		P	R	O	W
M	C	H	A	L	E	S	N	A	V	Y		D	E	S
S	E	A	M	A	N			T	E	E	U	P		
			B	Y	T	E	S		R	A	P	I	D	S
L	T	C	O	L		E	P	P	S		S	N	A	P
O	M	A		A	L	G	R	E	E	N		T	M	I
D	A	N	L		I	S	I	T		A	D	O	P	T
I	N	D	I	A	N		G	A	U	G	E			
			L	U	R	E	D		L	A	T	V	I	A
A	C	E		F	I	R	S	T	S	T	R	I	N	G
M	A	W	R		T	A	C	I	T		A	G	U	E
B	E	A	N		E	P	O	D	E		C	O	R	N
I	N	X	S		M	E	T	E	R		T	R	E	T

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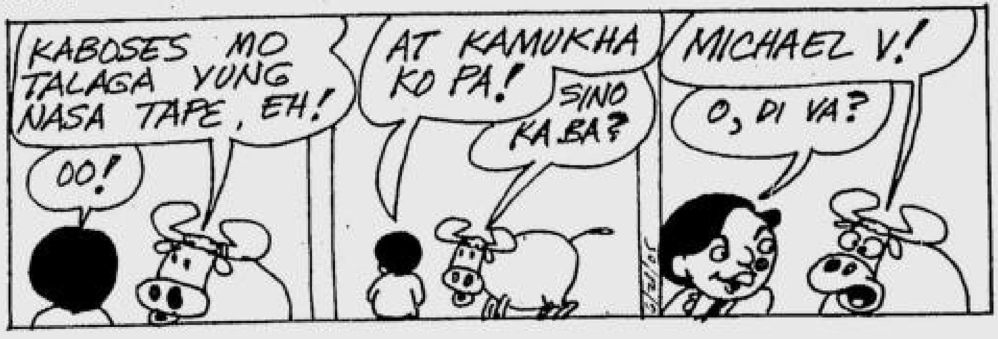
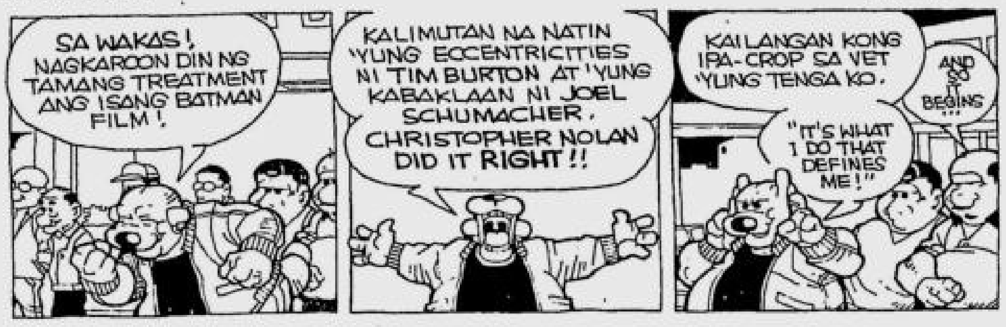
6/21/05

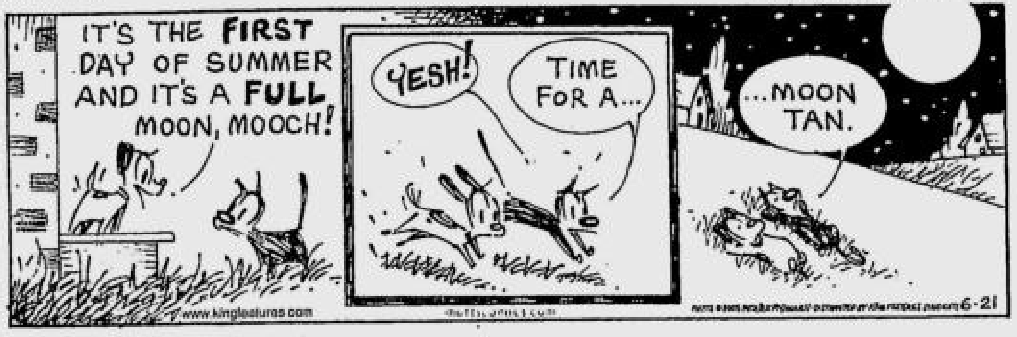
A. LIPIN BY JESS ABRERA


KABOSES MO TALAGA YUNG NASA TAPE, EH!
OO!
AT KAMUKHA KO PA!
SINO KA BA?
MICHAEL V!
O, DI VA?

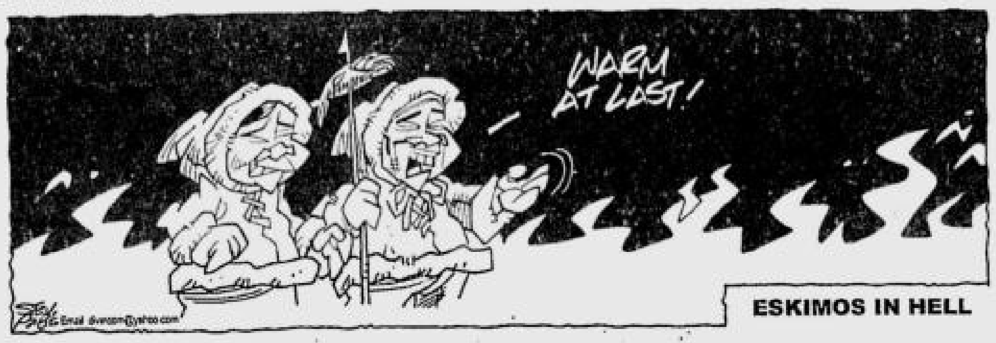
PUGAD BABOY BY P.M. JUNIOR


SA WAKAS! NAGKAROON DIN NG TAMANG TREATMENT ANG ISANG BATMAN FILM!
KALIMUTAN NA NATIN 'YUNG ECCENTRICITIES NI TIM BURTON AT 'YUNG KABAKLAAN NI JOEL SCHUMACHER. CHRISTOPHER NOLAN DID IT RIGHT!!
KAILANGAN KONG IPA-CROP SA VET 'YUNG TENGA KO.
AND SO IT BEGINS...
"IT'S WHAT I DO THAT DEFINES ME!"

MUTTS BY PATRICK McDONNELL

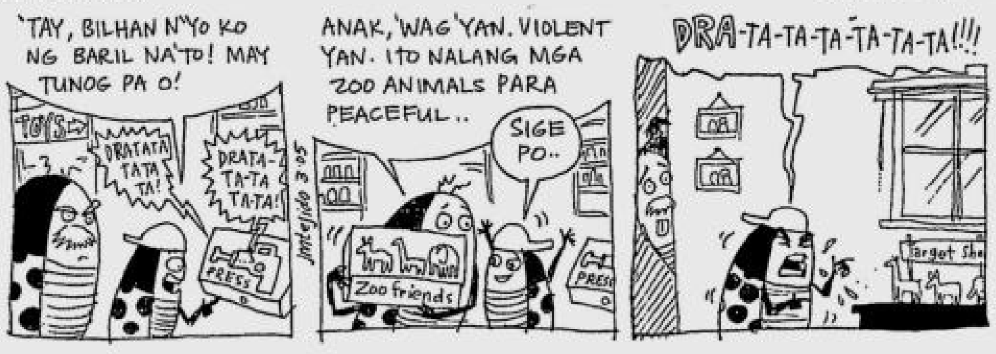

IT'S THE FIRST DAY OF SUMMER AND IT'S A FULL MOON, MOOCH!
YESH!
TIME FOR A...
...MOON TAN.
www.kingfeatures.com
6-21

DIVINE COMEDY BY STEVEN PABALINAS

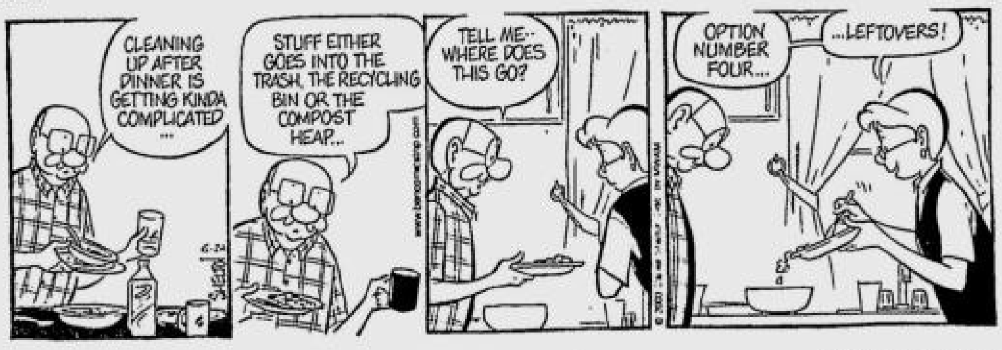

WARM AT LAST!

ESKIMOS IN HELL

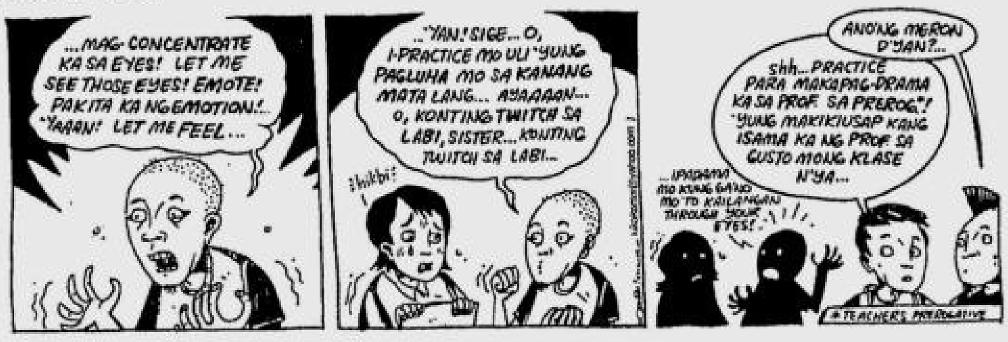
MIKROKOSMOS BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


'TAY, BILHAN N'YO KO NG BARIL NA'TO! MAY TUNOG PA O!
TOYS
DRATATA TATA TA!
DRATA-TA-TA TA-TA!
PRESS
ANAK, 'WAG 'YAN. VIOLENT YAN. ITO NALANG MGA ZOO ANIMALS PARA PEACEFUL..
SIGE PO..
Zoo friends
DRA-TA-TA-TA-TA-TA-TA!!!
Target Sh

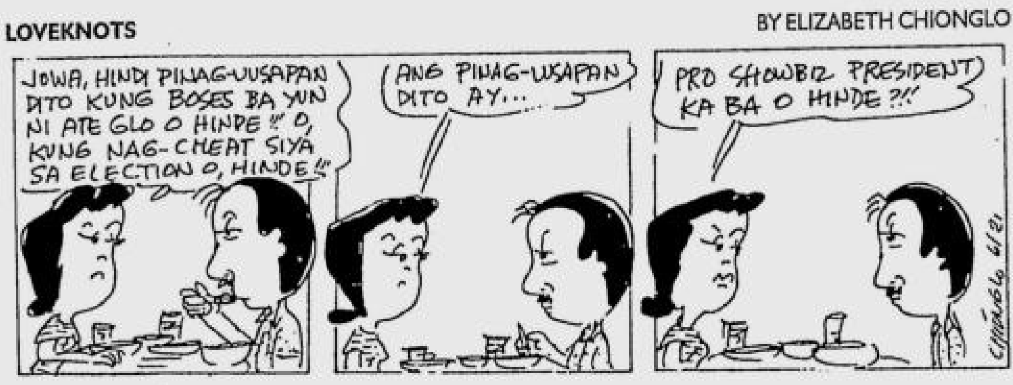
BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON


CLEANING UP AFTER DINNER IS GETTING KINDA COMPLICATED...
STUFF EITHER GOES INTO THE TRASH, THE RECYCLING BIN OR THE COMPOST HEAP...
TELL ME-- WHERE DOES THIS GO?
OPTION NUMBER FOUR...
...LEFTOVERS!

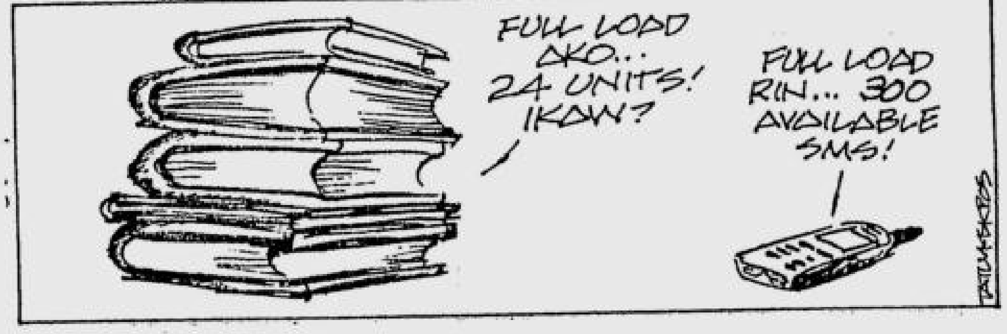
KIKO MACHINE BY MANIX ABRERA


...MAG-CONCENTRATE KA SA EYES! LET ME SEE THOSE EYES! EMOTE! PAKITA KA NG EMOTION!.. 'YAARN! LET ME FEEL...
..'YAN! SIGE... O, I-PRACTICE MO ULI 'YUNG PAGLUHA MO SA KANANG MATA LANG... AYAAAAN... O, KONTING TWITCH SA LABI, SISTER... KONTING TWITCH SA LABI...
hikbi
ANONG MERON D'YAN?...
shh... PRACTICE PARA MAKAPAG-DRAMA KA SA PROF. SA PREROG.*! 'YUNG MAKIKIUSAP KANG ISAMA KA NG PROF. SA GUSTO MONG KLASE N'YA...
...IPADAMA MO KUNG GAANO MO 'TO KAILANGAN THROUGH YOUR EYES!..
*TEACHERS PREROGATIVE

LOVEKNOTS BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


JOWA, HINDI PINAG-UUSAPAN DITO KUNG BOSES BA YUN NI ATE GLO O HINDE!" O, KUNG NAG-CHEAT SIYA SA ELECTION O, HINDE!!"
ANG PINAG-UUSAPAN DITO AY...
PRO SHOWBIZ PRESIDENT KA BA O HINDE ?!!
CHIONGLO 6/21

TULDOK BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


FULL LOAD AKO... 24 UNITS! IKAW?
FULL LOAD RIN... 300 AVAILABLE SMS!

HOT GALS do The Supremes. Miko Calo, Maureen Santiago, Gina Garcia and Nicole Santos

JUDA LIU with Menchu Geronimo, Bong Pineda, Kelly Gana, Gerry Panungao and Elsa Buntua

"ELVIS PRESLEY." Andrew Ferrariz , Lance Feliciano and Wilson Ong

Traditional town fiesta in the heart of metropolis

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by Alex Van Hagen using **Kodak** EasyShare system

WHEN Urban Bel-Air Village in Makati gets into a roll, they rooooll, *palanggas*.

There were *calesa* rides, music from live performing *bandas*, *perya* rides, a *tiangge*, games and prizes, and tons of home-cooked food. An entire community rolled up its sleeves and worked together to bring about this fiesta.

The fabulous, super-fun, *probinsya*-style party was Pasinaya 2005, Barangay Bel-Air's annual weekend festival of thanksgiving.

This awesome happening has been the highlight of the Bel-Air life for eons. Leading the 2005 edition was Bel-Air's hotshot *barangay* chair **Constancia Lichauco** and her gang of three—Bel-Air Village Association president **Ricardo Bautista**; television's brilliant travel gal **Susan Medina**, who provided creative direction; and top director **Floy Quintos**. They were supported by the colorful Barangay Bahaghari, and around 165 super-game Bel-Air residents.

Day 1 was the turn of Bel-Air's super assets—the household help and maintenance staff—to party. During the "Gabi Ng Kasambahay," there was a competition like the television show "American Idol" and its clones. Some pretty hot talents were revealed.

Day 2 was for the hip, younger village residents. A large bazaar catered to consumer victims like *moi*. Teeners and kids became catwalk divas for a day for Rustan's fashion show. Finally, it was rock and roll time with the hottest bands in the local rock scene.

Day 3 honked to a start with a vintage car show and a motorcade. Though the shiny toys of richie boys had car-lovers agog, a contingent of cute canines in the dog show that followed stole the spotlight.

The grand culmination of the fiesta was—natch!—the production "Bel-Air, Kulay at Sayaw Noon at Ngayon," performed by a large group of residents, both young and the young-at-heart.

This super successful Pasinaya 2005 was a community-wide endeavor of the tightly knit residents of Bel-Air Village, Makati City, which should be a prime model for the rest of the country's *barangays*.

Di bala, palanggas?

'Printemps'

Ahh, *mon cher*, it's late spring in Paris and, in Cosmo Manille, the French spring arrived with a bang!

The chair of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts, gentleman for all seasons **Ambeth Ocampo**, and **Bernard Regnauld-Fabre**, *chargé d'affaires* of the French Embassy, with tons of well-heeled invitees, *palanggas*, formally opened the French Spring Season, celebrating "Unity in Diversity."

The opening night at the Carlos P. Romulo Auditorium was a prelude to what this month-long celebration of French-Filipino cooperation and cultural diversity had in store for us.

The French embassy, in cooperation with Alliance Française de Manille and Association Française d'Action Artistique, will bring some cool, creative forms of art expression and other must-go-to cultural events, with the generous support of the local private sector and the French business community, *naturellement*!

At the gala night, we were treated to a wonderful display of artistry and musical diversity. The multi-talented, tall, glam gal, **Helene Delavault**, whisked us off to flashy cabarets and cafés one associates with romantic Paris. Specially memorable was the demonstration of magnificent talent and skill by Monsieur **Yves Prin** on the piano, **Jean-Pierre Pichot** on bass, and our very own popular jazz musicians **Toots Tolentino** on sax and **Koko Bermejo** on drums.

Together, they enchanted, totally disarmed the invitees with their passion for music and flair for comedy.

The opening night's success was made possible by Air France and KLM, Alcatel, Carlos P. Romulo Auditorium, Cristal d'Arques, Mandarin Oriental, RCBC Plaza, Rustan's, Silk Cocoon, Veolia Water, Yamaha and Yamaha School of Music.

Another French cultural season, another month of diverse entertainment. Let's all enjoy it, dahlings.

Vive le France.

Humperdinck in Manila

Well, some songs are just unforgettable. Who hasn't been touched by the '60s classic "Release Me"? How about "Am I That Easy to Forget"? And "Quando, Quando, Quando"?

Those who have had their hearts broken can relate to such yesteryear hits as "There Goes My Everything," "A Man Without Love" and "The Way It Used to Be."

One of the world's favorite crooners, *palanggas*, is set to make his mark in Manille by serenading us. **Engelbert Humperdinck** performs live in Manila ("World Tour 2005") this Friday, June 24, at PICC Plenary Hall, CCP Complex.

"Enge" (to his fans) has sold over 130 million records worldwide and has done sellout shows throughout the world. This time, the King of Romance is giving an unforgettable performance of selections from his latest album, "Let there Be Love," which features love songs old and new, dahlings.

Seats go for P5,000, P2,000, P1,500 and P800. Call TicketWorld at 3742222, 3749999 and 8919999.

CHILDREN's contest judges: Lui Medina and Aileen Dionisio, with overall winner Sofia Abello

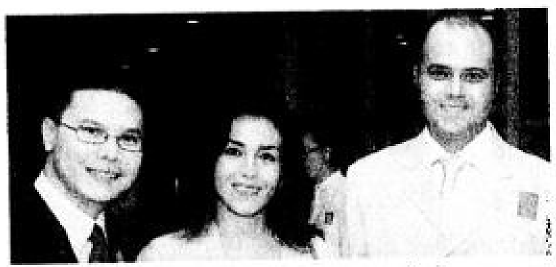
STATUESQUE Letty vda. de Santos does a fab *pandango sa ilaw* number.

"GREASE"-ING IT UP. Mike Reyes and Tricia Lichauco

BEL-AIR's brilliant organizer and social worker, Nene Lichauco, with Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay and Dr. Ellen Binay

WOMEN MOVERS. Malyn Lorayes; TV's top travel gal, vivacious Susan Medina; and Gina Bautista

THE DIPLOMATIC PACK. Mme. Silvia Schuff and Mme. Hanah Sagi, with their husbands, Israeli Ambassador Yehoshua Sagi and Argentine Ambassador Mario Schuff


AIR FRANCE-KLM's marketing manager in the Philippines, mega achiever and young good-looking Bingo Bonanza; with beautiful couple Mr. and Ms Ihab Sorial

GLENN de Leon and Eileen Lolarga of Ateneo de Manila University, with Ceferino Benedicto Jr., hotshot of Benedicto Steels

OLDER and wiser, Engelbert Humperdinck still has the X-factor.

LE FRENCH CONNECTION. *Tres* chic French mademoiselles, with dashing *chargé d'affaires* of the French Embassy Monsieur Bernard Regnauld-Fabre (right): Mary Meyssan; *tres charmante* and brilliant press attaché of the French Embassy, Benedicte Meyssan; Amandine de la Bernardie; and Rosa Melin

FRENCH culture admirers. The incomparable, INQUIRER's Amando Doronila; cyber smart Concepcion "Tata" Poblador, Deanna Ongpin-Recto, Bernardo Sim and Markus Ruckstuhl, all from the Alliance Française gang

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Coffee, tea or me?

From page C1

health experts, offers the most benefits:

- Lowers total cholesterol and LDL or bad cholesterol (low-density lipoprotein that can damage blood vessels, among others)
- Increases HDL (high-density lipoprotein) or good cholesterol levels
- Reduces blood pressure
- Thins the blood
- Reduces risk of heart attack
- Lessens the likelihood of death from heart attack
- Decreases the risk of stroke
- Reduces the risk of cancer
- Boosts longevity
- Enhances the immune system
- Aids digestion
- Prevents dental cavities and gingivitis

Green tea's indisputable antioxidant (a substance that fights disease-causing oxygen free radicals) power is widely known. Cancer researchers are now investigating the possibility that it can prevent the development of cancer.

Studies involving animals suggest "green tea extract protects against both the initiation and promotion stages of cancer. The inhibitory activity is believed to be mainly due to the antioxidative properties and possible anteproliferative effects of polyphenolic compounds in green and black tea" (Journal of the National Cancer Institute).

Fountain of youth

A cup of tea a day drives illness away. More than a healthier glow, a cup of tea gives a youthful boost. A hot cup of tea has a calming effect. Just a sip helps a person to sit back and relax.

To get the most benefit out of tea, it is best to take it at daytime. With a high caffeine content, a cup after dinner might keep you going all night long.

Herbal teas like chamomile, peppermint, sage, rosemary, lavender, ginger come from herbs and other plants. Largely caffeine-free, they can treat minor problems like nervousness, insomnia, irritability and indigestion.

Beauty eye treatment

Take two tea bags, dip in chilled water. Apply to the eyes to soothe and reduce eye bags. Leave on for 3-5 minutes.

Why not declare today your tea day? Many establishments in town can give you tea breaks. Try Coffee Bean and Tea Leaf, Zhong Nan Hai Chinese restaurant, Lotus Flower and Lily's (Hyatt Casino Hotel-Malate). If you like to enjoy the benefits of green tea minus the caffeine, there's TEgreen (caffeine free tea capsule) from Pharmanex. Call Rowena Balatbat at 0917-8351225.

Love and light!

Reference: "The Green Tea Book" by Lester A. Mitscher, PhD, Victoria Dolby

Body fat isn't all bad

What most people are trying to get rid of actually helps protect bones and internal organs from injury, conserves body heat and supplies energy

WELL AND GOOD
Tina Juan

THOUGH many people would like nothing better than to get rid of all their body fat, a certain amount is essential for bodies to function properly.

The "essential fat" is in the marrow of the bones, in the heart, lungs, liver, spleen, kidneys, muscles and throughout the central nervous system.

Women need 10-12 percent of their body weight to be essential fat while men need two to four percent. Women have a higher requirement because of the demands of childbearing. Although there are exceptions, menstruation and ovulation usually stop when a woman's body fat drops below 15 percent.

Storage fat

The rest of the fat in the body is "storage fat," found around internal organs (internal storage fat) and directly underneath the skin (subcutaneous storage fat).

Storage fat acts like a shock absorber, protecting bones and internal organs from jarring impact. It also works as an insulator to conserve body heat, and a fuel depot for energy needs.

In theory, about 50 percent of storage fat is under the skin and the other 50 percent stored internally. But the ratio is not the same for everyone and changes as one gets older.

A normal body fat percentage range for the average woman is 18-26 of body weight, and 9-15 for a man. This includes essential and storage fat. To accommodate all fitness levels and ages, the American Council on Exercise believes women can have 14-31 percent body fat and still be considered "healthy" while men can have 6-25 percent.

Naturally 'fatter'

Past studies of two American migrant groups (the Donner Party and the Willie Handcart Company) stranded in mountain blizzards in the mid-1800s showed that more men than women died. The researchers believed it was a higher body-fat percentage that protected the women.

A higher fat percentage makes a woman naturally softer than a man. To expect a woman's body to be as lean and as muscular as a man's is to go against nature's design. Even at 20-percent body fat, some areas of a woman's body will have extra fat.

Covert Bailey, author of "Fit or Fat," observes that "healthy women do jiggle." He says, "The buttock and thigh muscles may be quite firm, but most women, unless they are very young or have inherited thin legs and hips, carry a wiggling layer of fat in that area. Even super-athletic women—those who play professional tennis or run marathons—are not as solid in the hips and thighs as their moderately active male friends—this is simply part of being a woman."

Fat is not distributed equally throughout the body. It is different for men and women. Men tend to store most of their fat in their trunk and upper body while women have most of their fat in their lower abdomen, hips, thighs and buttocks. The differences in fat distribution show up during adolescence. In childhood, boys and girls have the same body structure.

According to Vivian Heyward, author of a 75-study analysis of body fat testing methods, there are known ethnic differences in fat storage. Native Americans, Asians, Blacks and Hispanics tend to deposit more fat on the trunk than on the extremities and have more upper-body subcutaneous fat than Whites.

Fastest

Fat cells are made most rapidly during specific times—the last three months as a fetus until about 18 months of age, between the ages of 4 and 7, and during early adolescence. After that, fat cells only increase or decrease in size depending on whether one gains or loses weight.

However, a person who becomes significantly overweight, can develop new fat cells because there is a limit to how much existing fat cells can expand. Another "danger" period is the last three months of pregnancy. Studies have proven that new fat cells can be made if a woman gains excessive weight.

A normal weight person has about 25-35 billion fat cells while a person who has been overweight since childhood can have 50-100 billion. A severely obese person can have as much as 270 billion fat cells.

Research indicates that a person with more fat cells will have a harder time losing weight than someone with fewer fat cells. This highlights the importance of preventing childhood obesity since childhood is the time when the most fat cells are created.

Differing behavior

A fat cell has been described as a "tiny plastic bag that holds a drop of fat." It was previously thought that all fat cells had the same function—to passively store and release energy.

Scientists now believe that fat cells have different biochemical receptors or triggers. They have identified two kinds of receptors—alpha-receptors, which cause the storage of fat; and beta-receptors, which cause the release of fat.

And wouldn't you know it? Fat cells in the hips, thighs and buttocks have more fat-retaining or alpha-receptors while fat cells in the abdomen have more beta, or fat-releasing, receptors.

Scientists have also found that hormones influence receptors. Male hormones tend to trigger the fat-releasing receptors, while female hormones tend to stimulate the fat-retaining receptors. This explains why hip and thigh fat is so stubborn to remove.

We all respond differently to an exercise and weight loss program because of different factors affecting our fat cells and fat distribution patterns. A wife should not compare her weight loss with her husband's who will probably lose fat in his belly much more easily.

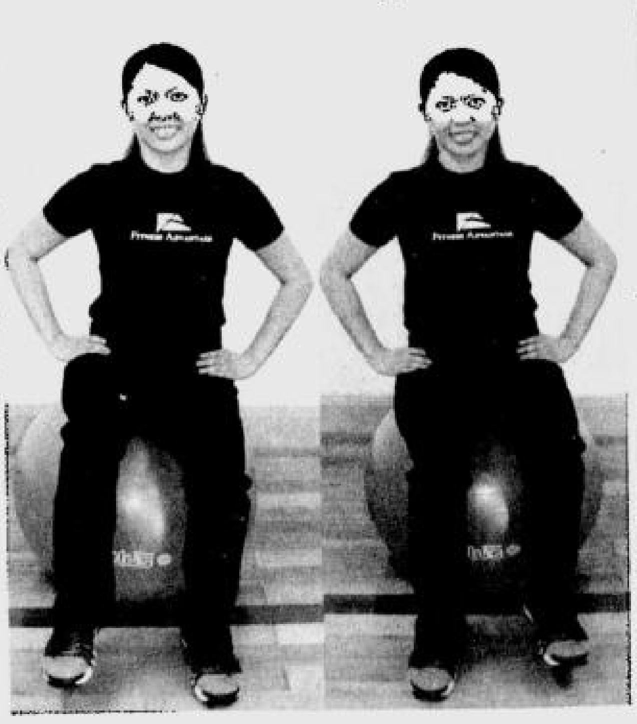
Two friends trying to lose weight cannot expect similar results because one may have developed more fat cells during childhood.

Next week: The two different kinds of abdominal fat

Visit www.tinajuanfiitness.info

EXERCISE OF THE WEEK

Seated knee-raise on stability ball



THIS simple exercise challenges deep "core" muscles in the torso.

Equipment:
Stability ball

Exercise technique:
1. Sit on the ball with legs slightly apart and hands on the hips.
2. Slowly raise your right knee, put it down, then carefully raise your left knee.
3. Alternately lift both knees for the desired number of repetitions.

Performance tips:
1. Avoid jerking when you raise your knees. Always move with control.
2. Focus on keeping your hipbones steady as you lift and lower your knees.
3. Tighten up deep inside the center of your body to help you stabilize.
4. Exhale as you raise your knees; inhale as you lower.
5. If you feel you need more stability, hold the sides of the ball.

Repetitions:
Do 10 repetitions on each leg.

MEDICard, The Healthcare I Deserve!

What are the functions of kidneys?

Take Charge Doc!

The kidneys are two bean shaped organs situated at the upper and posterior portion of the abdominal cavity. These organs are responsible for filtering and processing blood and other body fluids and maintaining our body's electrolyte and mineral balance. Filtrates of this process are passed out of the body as urine. The kidneys also produce hormones vital to red blood cell integrity and production.

The answer to this week's question about the functions of kidneys is from ***Dr. Reginald Bautista****, our medical service provider based in Capitol Medical Center (CMC) in Quezon City.*

Dr. Reggie specializes in Urology and has been practicing his profession for more than 12 years now. He obtained his degree in Medicine from the University of Santo Tomas in 1984, and in 1990 his residency training for his specialization at the Veterans Memorial Medical Center. Dr. Bautista is affiliated with the Philippine Urological Association, the Philippine College of Surgeons, the Philippine Medical Association and the Quezon City Medical Society. MEDICard members may visit him for consultation services at CMC, Room 1007, Mondays to Saturdays from 9am to 12noon.

MEDICard
Nicky

MEDICard's Medical Director, Dr. Nicky Montoya answers questions on health through the assistance and expertise of MEDICard's network of accredited specialists. Write to Dr. Nicky or E-mail him at inquiry@medicardphils.com for your inquiries on health matters.

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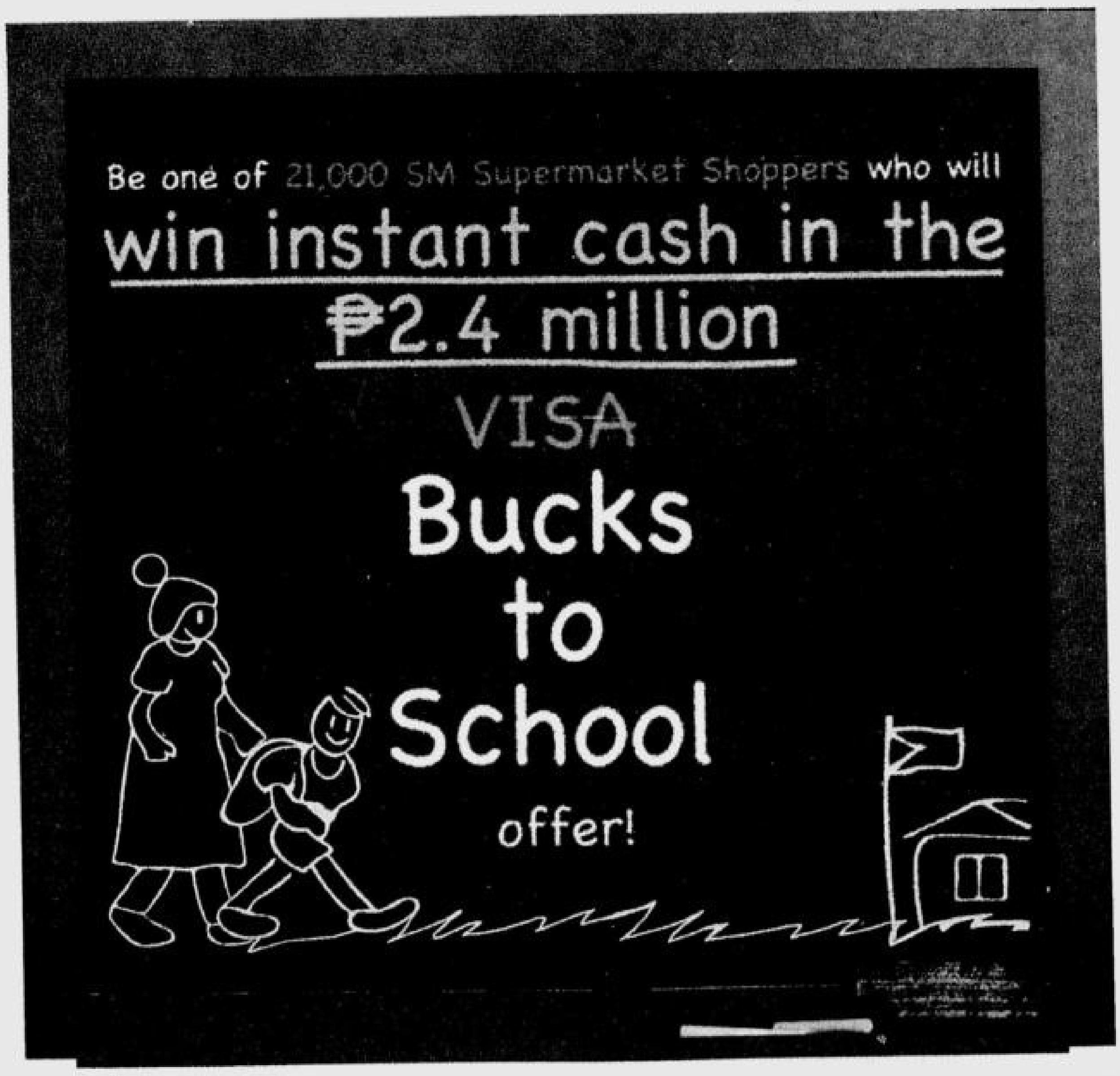
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- Simply proceed to the Visa redemption booth located at all SM Supermarkets nationwide and present your Visa transaction receipt for verification. The cardholder shall then be allowed to draw a scratch card from the Visa box. Simply scratch the card to determine the prize.
- Only purchases from SM Supermarkets nationwide made within the promo period (June 1 to July 15, 2005) shall be honored. Availing of the chance to win thru claiming of scratch card shall be within the promo period only. Drawing of scratch cards do not have to be on the same outlet nor the same day where purchase was made as long as it is within the promo period. All winning scratch cards shall contain an authenticated serial number approved and cleared with the Department of Trade and Industry.
- All scratch card instant prize winners may claim their prize at the Customer Service Booth of any SM Supermarket branch nationwide. To claim the prize, the cardholder must present their transaction receipt verified by the booth attendant, the winning scratch card, and their VISA Card at the Customer Service Counter. All prizes are tax free.
- Scratch card instant prize winners have until sixty (60) days from the end of the promo period, or until September 15, 2005 to claim their prize. Prizes not claimed within the 60-day period shall be forfeited in favor of the sponsor with prior approval from DTI.

See flyers for details. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0430, Series of 2005.

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